ARABIC CLASSICAL ACCOUNTS OF INDIA AND CHINA

Book One

AL-MASĀLIK WA'L-MAMĀLIK

Roads and Kingdoms

BY IBN KHURDĀDHBIH

d. c. A.H. 300/A.D. 912

Book Two

AKHBĀR AL-ṢĪN WA'L-HIND

An Account of China and India

BY SULAYMĀN AL-TĀJIR ET AL.

Compiled in A.D. 851

Translated from Original Arabic
with Commentaries by
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Introduction

Ibn Khurdādhbih, Abu'l-Qasim 'Ubayd Allāh 'Abd Allāh (b. *c.* 820; d. *c.* 912), of Persian origin, occupied the position of chief of post and information in al-Jibāl (northern Iraq). In later years, he became a close associate of the 'Abbāsid Caliph al-Mu'tamid (A.D. 892–902) at Sāmarrā'. Author of several works on a variety of subjects like history, geography, genealogy, music, cookery, etc., he was a highly erudite person. He claimed to have translated Claudius Ptolemy's geographical compendium, *Geographiya*, from a 'foreign language' (probably Greek or Syriac) into Arabic but this translation is now extant. What has survived is his world geography entitled *Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik* ('The Book of Roads and Kingdoms') which deals with routes and distances and covers regional, descriptive and economic geography. But it is an abridged version of the original draft prepared in *c.* 846–7 which has not survived. The abridgement was not made later than 885–6.[1] Ibn Khurdādhbih was the first Arab writer who wrote on world geography and belonged to the 'Irāqī school of geographers of the period.[2] In the presentation of the information, he used Persian terminology and names, hence it is not unlikely that he used some earlier Persian sources on the subject as well as government records which must have been available to him as chief of post and information. Besides, he used the reports of merchants, travellers and the envoys sent by the government to different parts of the world.

Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik was first edited by M.J. De Goeje, the well-known Dutch scholar who published a large

[1] See my article 'Ibn Khuradādhbih', in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, vol. vii, pp. 356–57.

[2] For the 'Irāqī school of geographers, see my article 'Djughrāfiyā', in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd edition).

number of Arabic geographical texts of the mediaeval period. The work was published from Leiden in 1889 (*Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, vii). My English translation of the portion relating to India is based on this text. The account of India deals with the itineraries of places, distances and trade-routes.[1] The account of the ancient kings of India deals with the sundry dynasties who ruled in different parts of India like the Gūrjara-Pratīhāras, the Rāṣṭrakūtas, the Pālas, etc. Of the various dynastic rulers of the period, the Arabs considered the Rāṣṭrakūtas as their friends and praised them. The reason behind this friendship and adoration was perhaps political. The Arab rulers of Sind at this time were confronted on their eastern frontiers (from Multan down to Deval, near Karachi) with the powerful Gūrjara-Pratīhāras with whom they seemed to have had continuous skirmishes. One of the strategies of the Arabs was that whenever there was a danger of an attack from the Gūrjara-Pratīhāras, they threatened to take out and destroy the deity of the temple of the sun-god Āditya in Multan which was annually visited by the Hindus, thereby they averted a major war. The Gūrjara-Pratīhāras, on the other hand, waged internecine wars with the Rāṣṭrakūtas of the south. It was therefore quite natural for the Arabs to maintain good and peaceful relations with the Rāṣṭrakūtas who provided them all facilities of trade and commerce in their kingdom and gave them full freedom of worship and protection of life and property.

Ibn Khurdādhbih's account of the religious sects and schisms, as well as of the caste system, was based on a report prepared by the envoy of the 'Abbāsid minister Yaḥyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī (d. 805). The envoy visited India and prepared the report in about A.D. 800. This important report was utilized by a number of later writers but the full version is available only in Gardīzī's work *Zayn al-Akhbār*. The latter

[1] See map of India in my translation of al-Idrīsī's account of India, *India and the Neighbouring Territories*, in which the place-names described by Ibn Khurdādhbih have been incorporated.

enumerates ninety-nine divisions (sects) grouped under forty-four varieties (beliefs). Among the latter were: (1) those who believed in the Creator and the prophets; (2) those who confirmed the existence of the Creator but had no faith in the apostles and the prophets; (3) those who had no faith either in the Creator or the apostles; (4) those who rejected everything but confirmed the truth of Retribution and Punishment; (5) some others who maintained that Retribution and Punishment consisted in rebirth, in happiness or in misfortune and that Paradise and the Fire are apportioned to one's actions and are not of a lasting nature.[1]

Ibn Khurdādhbih's account of the beliefs (XXIII and XXIV) is obviously very brief and it is not unlikely that the full text of his lost work must have contained a fuller account. The reporter seemed to have fixed the number of the sects at ninety-nine, as found in Gardīzī, from an Islamic religious angle, for this figure coincides with the ninety-nine adjectives attributed to Allāh by the Muslims. Again, the classification of the beliefs, namely, those believing in the Creator and the prophets, etc., also seems to have been done to fit them into the framework of the Islamic fundamental belief in a monotheistic God and His Prophet which was used by the reporter as a criterion to adjudge the various religious beliefs prevalent in India at the time.

Another interesting aspect of Ibn Khurdādhbih's account is that the number of the castes has been fixed at seven which includes the four main castes also. Why the reporter chose this number is not clear. The only plausible explanation seems to be that the number seven occupied a special position in Islamic ontology of the mediaeval period. According to the authors of *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā* ('Epistles of the Brethren of Purity'), who were Ismā'īlīs, number seven was the perfect number, 'because it arises from the addition of odd and even,

[1] For a discussion of the sects and beliefs, see S. Maqbul Ahmad and Raja Bano, *Historical Geography of Kashmir*, pp. 7–10; cf. V. Minorsky, 'Gardīzī on India', in *BSOAS*.

since it is the total of the addition of the first odd number (3), to an even number (4), as well as the first even number (2) to an odd (5), and the principle of all number (1) to the "complete" number (6).' The Brethren, in their ontological conception of number, claimed to follow Nicomachus and Pythagoras, 'a monotheistic sage who hailed from Ḥarrān.'[1] The Greeks also divided the Indian society into seven categories: the Sophists (Brahmans), the tillers of the soil, herdsmen, handicrafts men and retail dealers, the warriors, superintendents belonging to the intelligence service of the king and the councillors of state. A factual exposition of the caste system was however made much later by al-Bīrūni who described the four main castes and others outside them.[2]

The Account of China and India, Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa'l-Hind forms a part of the *Silsilat al-Tawārīkh* ('The Chain of Histories), a collection of reports on China, India and other countries compiled by Abū Zayd al-Sīrāfī, in about A.D. 916. Abū Zayd first lived in Sīraf, of which his cousin was the governor and then settled down in Baṣra. He was keenly interested in collecting information on various countries from the sailors, merchants and travellers and was himself very knowledgeable in this respect. He had met the well-known Arab historian-globe-trotter al-Mas'ūdī twice in Baṣra, once before the latter left for India in A.D. 915 and a second time when he returned from there. They exchanged notes on various current geographical problems.[3] When the Account of China and India was given to Abū Zayd for the verification of its authenticity, he found it was true except in one or two cases. He pointed out it was incorrect to say that the food offered by the Chinese to their dead was eaten by the dead body overnight. This is what he was told by whose who knew China well. He fixed the date of the Account at A.H. 237/

[1] Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 168–70.

[2] S. Magbul Ahmad, *Indo-Arab Relations*, pp. 116–19.

[3] See details in my article 'Travels of Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al Mas'ūdī', in *Islamic Culture*, pp. 523–24.

A.D. 851.[1] The report on the kings of India incorporated in the Account in greater deatil was, as has been noticed above, prepared by the envoy of Yaḥyā b. Khālid in about A.D. 800. It is sometime believed that *Account of China and India* was written by Sulaymān al-Tājir but we find that his name appears only once and that too in the body of the text. Hence, it may be assumed that it was not the work of one person but of several including Sulaymān. It is a collection of several reports prepared between A.D. 800 and A.D. 851. There is little doubt however that it is the earliest and the most authentic account of India and China in Arabic literature.

The Silsilat al-Tawārīkh (Arabic text) was first published by Langlès in 1811 and a French translation with a commentary was published by M. Reinaud from Paris in 1845 under the title: *Relation des voyages faits par les Arabes et les Persans dans l'Inde et a la Chine*. In 1922, Gabriel Ferrand published a French translation under the title *Voyage du Marchand Arabe Sulayman en Inde et en Chine*. In 1948, M. Jean Sauvaget published a fresh Arabic text with a French translation and an exhaustive commentary. My translation of the Account into English is based on Sauvaget's Arabic text.

It is hoped that the two texts rendered by me into English will serve as valuable source material for the historians and geographers of India and China. The information contained in the two texts is fascinating, attractive and authentic.

Lastly, I am grateful to the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla for publishing the work. I am particularly indebted to Professor Margaret Chatterjee, Director of the Institute, for taking keen interest in its publication, and to Shri Buddhadev Bhattacharya for its production.

Aligarh S. Maqbul Ahmad
20 February 1989

[1] *Relation des voyages* (Ar. text), pp. 61–62.

BOOK ONE

Al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik

(Roads and Kingdoms)

I Text

I The greatest king of India is Balharā,[1] that is to say, 'the king of kings'. Among the other kings of India are: Jāba,[2] the king of al-Ṭāqā,[3] the king of al-Jurz,[4] (*al-Jurzara), Ghāba (*Jāba),[5] Rahmā (*Dharma),[6] and the king of Qāmarūn.[7]

II The road from al-Fahraj to al-Sind: from al-Fahraj[1] to al-Tābrān (*al- Tāerān),[2] one of the districts of Mukrān, it is ten *farsakh*; then to Bāsurjān,[3] the town of al-Kharūn[4] (*al-Kharūj), fourteen *farsakh*; then to Qaryat Yaḥyā b. 'Amr,[5] ten *farsakh*; then to Hadhār,[6] ten *farsakh*; then to Madar,[7] ten *farsakh*; then to Mūsāra,[8] nine *farsakh*; then to Dirak Bāmwayh,[9] nine *farsakh*; then to Tajīn,[10] ten *farsakh*; then to Muqāṭa'at al-Balūṣ,[11] twenty *farsakh*; then to Jabal al-Māliḥ,[12] six *farsakh*; then to al-Nakhl,[13] nine *farsakh*; then to Qalamān,[14] six *farsakh*; then to Sarāy Khalaf,[15] four *farsakh*; then to Fannazbūr,[16] three *farsakh*; then up to Ḥīs,[17] on the way to Qandābīl,[18] there lies a desert for twenty *farsakh*;[19] then to Sarāy Dārān,[20] ten *farsakh*; then to al-Jīthā,[21] ten *farsakh*; then to Quṣdār,[22] ten *farsakh*; and from Quṣdār to al-Jaur,[23] forty *farsakh*; then to Usrūshān,[24] forty *farsakh*; then to Qaryat Sulaymān b. Sumay',[25] twenty-eight *farsakh*; this Qaryat Sulaymān is the entrepôt of the (travellers) coming from Khurāsān and bound for al-Sind and al-Hind; then to al-Manṣūra,[26] eighty *farsakh*.

III Thus from the beginning of the district of Mukrān up to al-Manṣūra, it is three hundred and fifty-eight *farsakh*, and the road passes through the country of al-Zuṭṭ who are the guardians of the road.

IV From Zaranj,[1] a town in Sijistān,[2] up to al-Multān,[3] it is a journey of two months. Al-Multān was named 'Frontier-place of the House of Gold' (*Farj Bayt al-Dhahab*), because

Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim, the lieutenant of Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf,[4] had obtained forty *bhār* of gold from a house there. One *bhār* is equal to three hundred and thirty-three *mann*. It was for this reason that the town was named 'Frontier-place of the House of Gold.' [The word] *al-farj* is synonymous with *al-thaghr* [frontier]. The quantity of the gold obtained was 2,397,600 *mithqāl*.[5]

V Among the towns of al-Sind are: al-Qīqān,[1] Banna,[2] Mukrān, al-Mayd,[3] al-Qandhār.[4] Ibn Mufarrigh says:

> *In Qandhāra; and anyone who is destined to die*
> *In Qandhāra, he is the object of many a conjecture.*[5]

Then Qusdār, al-Būqān, Qandābīl, Fannazbūr, Armābīl,[7] al-Daybul,[8] Qanbalī,[9] Kanbāyā,[10] Suhbān,[11] Sadūsān,[12] Rāsk,[13] al-Rūr,[14] Sāwandrā,[15]/al-Multān, Sandān,[16] al-Mandal,[17] al-Baylamān,[18] Surasht,[19] al-Kayraj,[20] Marmad,[21] Qālī,[22] Dahnaj,[23] and Barōṣ.[24]

VI 'Imrān b-Mūsā al-Barmakī had guaranteed an income of 1,000,000 *dirham* from al-Sind over and above the expenditure (incurred) there.

VII Then (from 'Urmūz) to Thārā[1] it is a journey of seven days. This [town] is the frontier between Fārs[2] and al-Sind. From Thārā to al-Daybul it is a journey of eight days, and from al-Daybul to the mouth of the Mihrān,[3] the river of al-Sind, it is two *farsakh* by sea.

VIII From al-Sind, costus, *qanā* and *al-khayzurān* (bamboos) are imported.

IX From the Mihrān to 'Ūtkīn,[1] which marks the beginning of India, it is a journey of four days. In this country, *qanā* grows in the mountains and various corns in its valleys. Its inhabitants are insolent, rebellious and thieves.

X Two *farsakh* from there live al-Mayd who are thieves.[1] Then, from there to Kūlī,[2] it is two *farsakh*, and from Kūlī to Sindan eighteen *farsakh*. It grows teak-wood and *qanā*. Then,

from Sindān to Mulay,[3] it is a journey of five days [by sea].

XI Mulay has black pepper and *qanā*. The sailors relate that each bunch of the black pepper has a leaf over it which protects it from the rains. Thus, when the rain stops, the leaf lifts itself away [from the bunch], and, when it starts raining again, it resumes [its original position].

XII From there (Mulay) to Bullīn,[1] it is two days' journey [by sea], and from there to al-Lujjat al-'Uẓmā (the Great Fathomless Sea) it is a journey of two days [by sea].[2] From Bullīn the sea routes bifurcate. Thus, anyone sailing along the coast will take two days from Bullīn to Bābattan.[3] This is the country of rice and is the source of provisions for the inhabitants of Sarandīb.[4]

XIII From Bābattan to al-Sinjilī[1] and Kabashkān,[2] it is one day's journey. It grows rice, and from there to the mouth of the Kūdāfarīd[3] it is three *farsakh*; and from there to Kaylakān,[4] al-Lawā[5] and Kanja,[6] it is two days' journey and it has wheat and rice. From there to Samundar,[7] it is a journey of ten *farsakh*. It has rice, and aloes-wood is brought here from a distance of fifteen to twenty days' journey by means of a river from Kāmrūn (*Kāmarūb)[8] and other places.

XIV From Samundar to Urnshīn,[1] it is twelve *farsakh*. This is a great kingdom and has elephants, beasts of burden and buffaloes. It has abundant provisions, and its king is highly honoured. From Urnshīn to Abīna,[2] it is four days' journey, and this place also has elephants.

XV Anyone going from Bullīn to Sarandīb has to undertake one day's journey.

XVI Anyone desiring to go to China would begin [his voyage] from Bullīn and would keep Sarandīb to his left. From Sarandīb to the Island of Alankābālūs,[1] it is a journey which takes ten to fifteen days [by sea]. Its inhabitants are naked [people] and their food consists of bananas, fresh fish and coconuts. Iron forms the bulk of their wealth. They sit in

company with the merchants. From Alankābālūs to the Island of Kalah,[2] it is a journey of six days [by sea]. This is the kingdom of the Indian Jāba. . . .[3]

XVII The kings as well as the people of India allow adultery, but prohibit [drinking of] wine, except the King of Qimār. He prohibits both adultery and wine. As for the King of Sarandīb, wine is brought for him from 'Irāq which he drinks.

XVIII The kings of India are interested in tall elephants (lit. 'exalting the heights'), and pay large quantities of gold for their prices. The tallest elephant is nine cubits [high], except the elephants of al-Aghbāb[1] which are ten to eleven cubits [high].

XIX The greatest king of India is Balharā which means 'the king of kings'. His signet-ring has the following engraved on it: 'Anyone who loves you with a purpose will turn his back up on you as soon as it is served.' He resides in al-Kumkam, the land of teak-wood.[1] He is followed by the King of al-Ṭāqā;[2] then comes Jāba;[3] then after him comes the King of al-Jurz;[4] he uses the *Ṭāṭarīya dirhams*[5] [as his currency]. He is followed by Ghāba (*Jāba);[6] and then comes Rahmā (*Dharmā).[7] Between his kingdom and those of the others there is a journey of one year. It is related that he possesses fifty thousand elephants. In his kingdom are found the cotton-velvet cloth and the Indian aloes-wood. Then comes the king of Qāmrūn (*Qāmarūb). His kingdom adjoins China. In his country there is abundant gold[8] and rhinoceros.[9] This animal has a single horn in his forehead, which is one cubit long and two handfuls in thickness. One usually finds inside it an image from one end of the horn to the other, so that when it is ripped open you will see the white image on a jet-black background having the shape of either a human being, an animal, fish, peacock, or some other bird. The Chinese make girdles out of it, and the price of each one ranges from three hundred to three thousand or up to four thousand *dīnārs*. All the above-mentioned kings have perforated ears.

XX Among the well-known towns of India are: Sāml,[1] Hūr.y.n.,[2] Qālūn,[3] Qandhār,[4] and Qashmīr.[5]

XXI [Among the commodities imported] from India are:

aloes-wood, sandal-wood, camphor, camphor-water (*al-mākāfūr*), nutmeg, cloves, cardamom, cubeb, coconut, cloth made of herbs (*al-ḥashīsh*), cotton-velvet cloth and elephants . . . from Mulay/and Sindān, black-pepper . . . and from al-Sind, costus, *qanā* and *al-khayzurān* (bamboos).

XXII The Indians are divided into seven castes:

Al-Shāktharīya. These are the most noble of them all. The kings belong to them. All the other castes bow [lit. 'prostrate'] to them, while they do not bow to anyone.

Al-Barāhima. They do not drink wine or any of the fermented liquors.

Al-Ksatrīya. They drink up to three bowls [of wine] only. The Brahmins do not marry into them, but they marry into [the Brahmins].

Al-Shūdarīya. They are the cultivators of land.

Al-Bayshīya. They are the artisans and the craftsmen.

Al-Sandālīya. They are the entertainers and musicians. Their womenfolk are beautiful.

Al-Dhunbīya. They are story-tellers and entertainers and play musical instruments and games [acrobatics].

XXIII The Indians have forty-two religious sects: there are some amongst them who believe in the Creator, the Glorious and Powerful, and in the Prophets; again, there are some who reject the Prophets; and there are some who reject all.

XXIV The Indians claim that they can achieve their objectives with the help of magic. With its help they can cure[a]

[a] The text has يستون , but the correct reading seems to be يشفون , cf. *Marvazi*, Arabic text, p. 27: يشفون .

poison and remove it from anyone who has been poisoned. They also practise telepathy[a] and with its help they cause things to happen or prevent them from taking place and also cause harm or benefit. Again, they produce phantoms[b] to the bewilderment of the sage. Then they claim that they can control the rains and cold.

XXV The source of the Mihrān, the river of al-Sind, lies in the mountains of Shiqinān. The river of al-Sind is a branch of the river Jayḥūn, and a part of the kingdom of India is attributed to it. It passes by al-Manṣūra and flows into the Great Eastern Sea after some of the rivers flow out of it in India.

[a] Lit. 'imagination and thought'.

[b] The word used is *al-takhā'īl* (التخاييل); it seems to be the plural of *takh'īl* which would mean 'to form a suspicion upon anyone'. Minorsky has translated it as 'phantoms (?)', see tr. *Marvazī*, p. 40.

II Commentary

I(1) Balharā stands for 'Ballahrāya', the Prakrit form 'Vallabha-rāja', meaning 'the beloved king' and not 'the king of kings' as mentioned by I. Khur. (See my article 'Balharā', in *E.I.*, 2, p. 991.) The name represents the title of the kings belonging to the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty of the Deccan (*c.* A.D. 753–975). The rulers of this dynasty commonly bore the title 'Vallabha' taken from the Chālukyas. In its Prakrit form, *Ballaha*, the title is often used alone in their inscriptions in Mysore (*Mysore Gazetteer*, II, p. 725). The Rāshṭrakūṭas or Rattas were perhaps connected with the Rajput Rathors and are supposed to be represented by the modern Reddis. According to R.G. Bhandarkar, the Rāshṭrakūṭa family was in all likelihood the branch of the race of Kṣatriyas named Rattas who gave their name to the country of Maharashtra. They were the real native rulers of the country, although there is difference of opinion whether they belonged to the north or the south. Their territory was often referred to as Rattavadi, in Tamil as Irattapādi. Their capital, at first Mayūrkhandi (Morkhand in Nasik district), was in the early ninth century at Mānyakhēta (*Mysore Gezetteer*, II, p. 724). According to Al-Mas'ūdī who visited India in A.D. 915, the capital of the kingdom of the Rāshṭrakūṭas (al-Balharay) was Mānkīr. It was surrounded by mountains, and the language of its inhabitants was *kīriya* (Kannada). (See *Murūj*, I, pp. 177–78, 381.) Mānkīr is now Malkhed in south of Gulbarga. (For further details on Al-Mas'ūdī's description of al-Balharay, see *al-Mas'ūdī Millenary Commemoration Volume*, pp. 105–108.) Ibn Khurdādhbih's Balharā should be identified with Govinda III of the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty who ruled from A.D. 793 to A.D. 814. Govinda III, son of Dhruva, was perhaps the greatest of the line and made himself felt from the Vindhyas and Mālva in the north to Kāñchī in the south. His personal

rule extended to the banks of the Tuṅgabhadrā, while he made his younger brother Indra, founder of the Gujarat branch, the hereditary viceroy of the province (*Mysore Gazetteer*, II, p. 733). No wonder his greatness and power is reflected in the early Arabic accounts like those of our author, the Merchant Sulaymān and Al-Mas'ūdī.

(2) Jāba represents the former hill state of Chamba (old name Čampā) in Himachal Pradesh. The ancient capital of the state was Brāhmapura (or Vayrātapaṭṭana). Hiuen-tsang describes the kingdom as being 667 miles in circuit; it must have included the whole of the hilly country between Alaknanda and the Karnālī rivers. Later, the city of Chamba became the capital. 'Founded probably in the 6th century by Marut, a Sūrajbansi Rājput, who built Brāhmapura, the modern Brāhmaur, Chamba was extended by Meru Varma (680), and the town of Chamba built by Sāhil Varma about 920' (*Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Punjab, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1908, p. 404). Although the early Arab writers seem to have used 'Jaba' as the name of the rulers of Chamba, it should be taken to represent the country. (For further discussion, see my article, 'Djāba' in *E.I.*, 2, Vol. I, p. 352.)

(3) Al-Ṭaqa (for variations, see *Akhbār*, p. 13, Note 27 a) represents the country Ṭakka-dėsa or Ṭakka-viṣaya mentioned in *Rājataraṅgiṇī*. Hiuen-tsang calls it Tseh-kia and describes it as bordering in the east on the Vipāsa [Beas] and in the west on the Indus. Its capital lay about fifteen *li* (= 8.6 kilometres) to the north-east of Shê-kie-lo (Sakala, Sialkot; see Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 249). Al-Mas'ūdī describes the kingdom as being situated in the mountains and having no access to the sea (*Murūj*, I, p. 177). 'In the time of Hwen Thsang', says, Cunningham, '*She-kie-lo*, or *Sâkala*, was in ruins, and the chief town of the district was *Tse-kia*, or *Chekia*, which may also be read as *Dhaka*, or *Taka*' (Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 207). He identifies Shê-kie-lo (Sâkala) with Sanglawala-Tiba or Sangala Hill and Tse-kia with Asarur, two miles to the south of the high road between Lahore and Pindi Bhatiyan, being forty-five miles from the former and

twenty-four from the latter place. (For full discussion, see ibid., pp. 206–21.) Cunningham says that the kingdom of Tse-kia or Tâki as mentioned by Hiuen-tsang, embraced the whole of the plains of the Punjab from the Indus to the Beas, and from the foot of the mountains to the junction of the five rivers below Multan (ibid., p. 170). Again, he says that in the seventh century the kingdom was divided into three provinces: Tâki in the north-west, Shortkôt in the east, and Multān in the south (ibid., p. 176.). Ibn Rusta describes the kingdom as small but full of wealth and populous towns ('Ibn Rusta's Account of India' in *The Geographer*, p. 51). Merchant Sulaymān also describes it as a small kingdom and says that the king lives in peace with those around him, for his army was small (see Book II, 27 below). Similarly, *Marvazī* says that the kingdom was small but rich and well cultivated (*Marvazī*, p. 47). Bīrunī mentions Tākēshar with Lauhāwar (*A.I.*, I, p. 208; cf. *Ṣifat*, p. 30). Minorsky identifies the former with Ṭakka-dėsa and the latter with Lohāra, valley of the Upper Tohi on the western approaches of Kashmir (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 249).

These accounts relating to the kingdoms of India were prepared sometime towards the beginning of the ninth century A.D., and Multān and the regions around it had already come under the Arab rule in the preceding century. The kingdom of al-Ṭāqa, therefore, must have had limited boundaries in the beginning of the ninth century as described by the Arab writers, being limited between the Beas and the Indus.

(4) Al-Jurz stands for al-Jurzara (= Gurjara; see Suavaget, *Akhbār*, p. 12, Note 26a). Here the name represents the Gurjara people, but the king should be identified with Nāgabhaṭa II (*d.* A.D. 833) of the Pratīhāra dynasty, a contemporary of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III (See Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 136–37, 141–42). According to R.C. Majumdar, after having conquered many regions in the north, east and the west, and having defeated Chakrāyudha, he occupied Kanauj which later became the capital of the Pratīhāras (*Imperial Kanauj*, pp. 24–28). Al-Jurz is described by Sulay-

mān as being hostile to the Arabs and to Islam, and his [Nāgabhaṭa II's] kingdom as being situated in a peninsula (lit. 'a tongue of the earth'; see *Akhbār*, p. 13). Al-Mas'ūdī, who visited India in A.D. 915–16, presents a similar account on al-Jurz (*Murūj*, I, p. 383). It is not unlikely that he borrowed Sulaymān's account from Abū Zayd al-Ḥasan al-Sīrāfī who had incorporated the latter's account in his own work completed in A.H. 304/A.D. 916. On his return from India to Sīrāf, Al-Mas'ūdī met Abū Zayd there and exchanged notes with him on India (see my article, 'Travels of Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Al-Mas'ūdī' in *Islamic Culture*, vol. XXVIII, No. 4, p. 523). It seems, therefore, that the accounts of Ibn Khurdadhbih, Sulayman, Al-Mas'ūdī, Abū Zayd and other Arab writers on Indian kings were drawn from the same original report on the Pratīhāras. When Al-Mas'ūdī visited India, the Gūrjara-Pratīhāras had already built a powerful empire with Kanauj as their capital. Al-Mas'ūdī refers to the king of Kanauj as Ba'ūra (identified by K.M. Munshi with Mihira Bhoja the Great, who died about A.D. 885; see *M.M.C.V.* pp. 108–09 and Note 5). There is no reference to Kanauj in the works of the early Arab writers. The 'peninsula' referred to by Sulaymān may be identified with Kathiawar.

(5) Ghāba is most probably a dittography of Jāba (see Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, pp. 249–50), and this represents Chamba. (For variations of the name, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 138.)

(6) The correct form of Rahmā is Dharma which stands for the first part of the name Dharmapāla, and the king referred to here is Dharmapāla who belonged to the Pāla dynasty of Bengal and reigned from A.D. 769 to A.D. 801 or A.D. 815. (For variations and further details, see *Akhbār*, p. 13, Note 28; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 137–38, 140.)

(7) Qāmarūn (*Qāmarūb) stands for Kamarupa (Assam). Different variations of the name are found in different works on India, but the earliest Arabic form must have been Qāmarūb. (For variations see *Idrīsī*, Ar. Text, pp. 57, 67; cf. *Idrīsī*, *Nuzhat*, p. 186; Al-Bīrūnī in *A.I.*, I, p. 201, gives 'Kamru'.) The king of Kamarupa referred to here may be identified with

Sālambha (or Prālambha) who flourished probably at the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century A.D. and belonged to the dynasty of the same name which ruled Assam from *c.* A.D. 800 to *c.* A.D. 1000. Their capital was at Harūppeśvara on the bank of the Lauhitya or the Brahmaputra river (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 142).

II(1) Al-Fahraj is identified with modern Fahraj, about twenty miles north of Rigan in Kirman (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 83). According to Al-Ya'qūbī (*Kitāb al-Buldān*, p. 286), the inhabitants of al-Fahraj called it Fahra (Persian, *Pahra*).

(2) Al-Ṭābrān stands for Ṭūrān, the region around Khuzdar in the eastern parts of the Kalat state, Baluchistan (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 106). Khuzdar was its capital (Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 331–32).

(3) Bāsūrjān seems to be the same as Māsūrjān of al-Idrīsī. According to al-Idrīsī, 'Māsūrjān' was a large and populated town with market places and cultivated lands and villages, and stood on the river of Ṭūerān (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 40, 53, 54). The total distance from Fahraj to Bāsūrjān as given by Ibn Khurdādhbih is twenty-four *farsakh* or approximately seventy-two miles. This places the town about twenty-five miles east of modern Magos. It is perhaps Regān in the Narmashir province of Kirman. The river mentioned by al-Idrīsī may be identified with the river Mashkel (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 94–95).

(4) Al-Kharūn should be read as al-Kharūj (cf. *Idrīsī*, Ar. Text, pp. 37, 39). Marquart suggests that Kharūn should be read as Kharūz (Minorksy, *Ḥ'A.*, p. 373; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 87). According to Al-Ya'qūbī (*Ta'rīkh*, p. 286), it was the first town of the district of Mukran. It was a district of which the town was Rāsk (Iṣṭakhrī, p. 105; Ibn Ḥauqal, p. 325; Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 45, 47).

(5–9) Qaryat Yaḥyā b. 'Amr is not identified. Hadhār (variation: Hadān, see I. Khur., p. 55, Note f) is not identified. Madar (variation: Madan/Mudan, see I. Khur., p. 55, Note g) and Mūsāra are unidentified. The identification of Dirak Bāmwayh (variation: Dirak Yāmūna, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, Ar.

Text, p. 48, Note 82) has been suggested with Yakmina, Lat. 28° N., Long. 61° E., as shown in the *London Times Atlas* (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 94–95).

However, the total distance between al-Fahraj and Dirak Bāmwayh as given by Ibn Khurdādhbin is seventy-two *farsakh* (= 216 Arabian miles = 230²/₅ geographical miles). This places the latter in the vicinity of Dizak of modern maps. Again, according to Ibn Khurdādhbih, the distance between Bāsūrjān (Regān in the Narmāshīr province of Kirman) and Dirak Bāmwayh is 144 *farsakh*, while, according to al-Idrīsī, it is 141 miles (*Idrīsī*, Ar.Text, p. 48). According to Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, II, p. 452), Dirak is a town in Mukran, and from there to Fannazbūr (Panjgur) it is three *marḥalas* and to Rask also three *marḥalas*.

(10–11) Tajīn is not identified. Muqāṭa'at al-Balūṣ means 'the Baluch province'. (I. Khur., p. 49, counts al-Qufṣ and al-Balūs among the towns of Kirman.) According to the author of *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam*, the Baluj were established in the steppe between Manūjān [south of Jiruft on the river Jagin] and other towns and the Kūfich mountains (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 124). Minorsky points out that the Baluch whose language belongs to the north-western group of Iranian dialects are apparently later immigrants in the Kirman region (ibid., p. 374). In the tenth century, the Baluch tribe lived in the Qufṣ (Kūfich) mountain on the Kirman border (Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 323). Yāqūt says that they resembled the Kurds and lived in the vast lands between Fars and Kirman at the foothills of the Qufṣ mountains. (*Mu'jam*, I, pp. 491–92).

(12) Jabal al-Māliḥ is the Bāmpusht Kōh. It was called the Salt Mountain, because most of its waters were saline (see *Idrīsī*, pp. 47, 82–83, 109).

(13–16) Al-Nakhl, Qalamān and Sarāy Khalaf are not identified. Fannazbūr is recognized as Panjgur (Makran province) (Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 329; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 83).

(17–22) Ḥīs is not identified. Qandābīl is Gandawa, seventy-five miles north-west of Khuzdar (Minorsky, (*Ḥ.'A.*,

p. 373). According to Nabi Bakhsh Baloch, Qandābīl was the frontier town of the north-western province of Sind, Budhya and Ṭūrān (i.e. Khuzdar), and its site lay either in the present-day Gandawa situated in the Kēch-Gandāwa Pargana or somewhere around it (See *Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, p. 406). The *desert* must refer to the hilly tracts between Panjgur and Gandawa. Sarāy Dārān is not identified. Al-Jīthā should lie in the region of Sakan Kalat, north-east of Panjgur, or beyond it to the north. Quṣdār is Khuzdar, eighty-five miles south of Kalat (Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 373).

(23) Al-Jaur is not identified, but it may stand for Jhau, west of Bela on the river Nal (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 83–84). The distance between Khuzdar and Jhau would be about 120 miles.

(24) The correct reading of this name seems to be Sadūstān/Sadūsān (*Saindhu-sthan). It lay to the west of Manjābrī, probably between Sahwan and the Indus (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 372), but Cunningham identified it with modern Sehwan (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 102).

(25) The location of Qaryat Sulaymān b. Sumay' is not certain, but it may have been situated on the bank of the Indus in the region of Sukkur, for our author seems to take us from Sadusan towards the north and then gives the distance from Qaryat Sulaymān up to Manṣūra in the south.

(26) Al-Manṣūra was the Arab capital of Sind. Its ruins, according to Cousen, lay forty-seven miles to the north-east of Hyderabad (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 372). The town was built by 'Amr. b. Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim, during the governorship of Sind of al-Ḥakam (A.H. 111–121/22), about two *farsakh* from the ancient town of Brahmanābād (or Bahmanābād), whose site has not yet been fixed. The ruins of al-Mansūrā, according to Baloch, lie at the famous hillock of Dalaur, eight miles south-east of Shadadpur and near, and to the east of the river Jamrau. The Archaeological Department fixed its site in 1920–21. In the opinion of Baloch, it was wrongly fixed at Brahmanabad in consideration of the local name of the town, namely,

Bānbhnāh (see *Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, pp. 385–89).

III Al-Zuṭṭ is the Arabicized form of *Jāt*.

IV (1) Zaranj (or Zarang) was the capital of the province of Sijistān in the Middle Ages (cf. I. Khur., p. 50). Its ruins are still found there covering a considerable area of ground (Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 335 *et seq.*).

(2) This is Sīstān which the earlier Arabs called Sijistān from the Persian, Sagistān. It is the lowland country lying round and to the eastward of the Zarah Lake. It was also called Nīmrūz in Persian, meaning 'mid-day' or the southern land, a name said to have been applied to the province because of its being south of Khurāsān (Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 334).

(3) According to Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, V, p. 227), the orthography of the name is Mūltān, but it was usually pronounced as Multān. Multan is the Mālava of the *Mahābhārata* and *Harshacharita* and Mallabhūmī of the *Rāmāyana*. It was the land of the Malli of Alexander's historians. Hiuen-tsang, who visited the town in A.D. 641, calls it *Meu-Lo-san Pu-Lo* (= Mulasthanipura) (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 96–97).

(4) The text has 'Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, brother' which was corrected and replaced by 'Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim, the lieutenant' by the editor M.J. de Goeje (I. Khur., p. 56, Note c). Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim was cousin to Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, the Governor of Iraq, and during the reign of the Umayyad Caliph al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik was sent by Ḥajjāj to invade Sind (see Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 612 *et seq.*).

(5) According to Al-Bīrūnī, 1 *bhāra* = 2,000 *pala*; 1 *pala* = 11 1/5 *mithqāl*; so 40 *bhāra* = 8,96,000 *mithqāls* (see *A.I.* I, pp. 165, 162–63, 160). Al-Bīrūnī's 1 *bhāra* of 2,000 *pala* would give a modern equivalent of 311 1/9 lbs. Troy, taking 1 *pala* = 5 1/3 tola, 1 tola = 168 grains. Thus, the total amount of gold acquired would be 12444 4/9 lbs.

V (1) Al-Qīqān is identified by Minorsky with Kījkānān, the seat of the ruler of Turan mentioned in *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam* (p. 123). He suggests its identification with Kalad (ibid.,

p. 373). On the authority of Hiuen-tsang, who calls it *Kay-kiang-na* and also on that of the Arab historians Baloch says that Kaykānān was the region in the vicinity of Naushkay between Khuzdar and Gandawa and formed the kingdom of the Rāy dynasty. Ṭūrān was a province of Kaykānān situated on the southern side, and the present state of Qalat and even Sarāwān and Jhālāwān also formed part of this kingdom (*Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, pp. 384–85).

(2) According to Yāqūt, *Mu'jam* I, 500–501, Banna (بَنَّة) belonged to Kabul; Al-Balādhurī mentions this town along with al-Ahwār (Lahore ?) and places them between Multan and Kabul (*Futūḥ*, p. 608). Can this town be identified with modern Bannu?

(3) Cf. Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 612; 'Mayd of al-Daybul' in *Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, p. 121, 'Daybul of Mayd' is described as a part of the kingdom of Dahir, son of Chach. According to Baloch, this meant that the port of Daybul was the centre of the Mayd people (ibid., p. 427). The Mayd were sea pirates and were found all along the coastal regions between Daybul and Kathiawar (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 118–19). I. Khurdādhbih's 'al-Mayd' may be identified with al-Dabul.

(4) This should be identified with Gandhār on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Cambay. According to Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, VI, p. 403), Qunduhār was either in Sind or in Hind. This town should not be confused with Gandhāra whose capital was Vayhind (*Udabhāṇḍa* a = Ohind) which lay between the Indus and the Kabul rivers, just above their confluence (Minorsky, *Ḥ. 'A.*, pp. 253–54).

(5) Al-Balādhīri (*Futūḥ*, p. 610) quotes the couplets of Ibn Mufarrigh thus:

كم بالعُرُوم وأرضِ الهند من قدم ـ ومن سَرَاتِهِمُ قَتلَى لا هُمُ قُبُرُوا

بقُندُهارَ ومن تُكتَبْ مَنِيَّتُهُ ـ بقندهار يرجِمْ دونَه الخبرُ

(6) Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, I, p. 510) places al-Būqān in Sind. According to Al-Balādhurī (*Futūḥ*, pp. 610, 611), Būqān and Qīqān were invaded by Ziyād b. al-Mundhir. Būqān is not identified, but it should be searched for in the region of Kalat.

(7) The original form of Armābīl, according to Baloch, is Arman-Bēla, a famous town of the present-day Las Bela. It was situated near the coast (*Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, pp. 403–04).

(8) Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, II, p. 495) gives the orthography of the name as al-Daybul. This was originally Deval. Al-Daybul was a famous mediaeval port of Sind, but it is extinct now. Several orientalists have attempted to locate the original geographical position of the port, and have offered various suggestions (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 82). Baloch has also discussed the problem in his commentary on *Fatḥnāma-i Sind* (pp. 366 *et seq.*). By a process of elimination of various possible sites, he came to the conclusion that the most probable location of Daybul would be at Bhanbhōr, situated on the Gharo channel about twelve miles north-west of Larry Bandar. Hodivala has identified Bhanbhōr with another town mentioned by the Arab writers, namely, Manjābrī (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 93). Yet Baloch's arguments seem to be very convincing, and Daybul may now be identified with Bhanbhōr. This would place Daybul about thirty miles east of Karachi. The Indus has considerably changed its course since Ibn Khurdādhbih wrote his account. The distance from Daybul to the mouth of the Indus, according to him, was two *farsakh* or about seven miles (see I. Khur., p. 62), and, according to Al-Mas'ūdī, who visited India in the beginning of the tenth century A.D., the Mihrān (Indus) flowed into the Arabian Sea about two days' journey from Daybul (*Murūj*, I, p. 378).

(9) Yāqūt gives the orthography of this town as Ban-bilā (*Mu'jam*, I, p. 497; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, Ar. Text, p. 38). According to Baloch, Qanbalī of the Arab writers and Qanbal of Al-Balādhurī (*Futūḥ* , p. 613) are one and the same place. He identified the town with Fan-Bela, the capital of Las Bela state (*Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, p. 438; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 77).

(10) Kanbāyā is identified with modern Cambay (Gujarat). The name, variously spelt by the Arab writers, is derived from 'Khambhāt' or 'Khambhā' (<*Stambha-tīrtha, i.e.* 'The place of pilgrimage of the pillar'). According to the Muslim geographers, it was situated about three *farsakh* (nine Arabian

miles) from the sea (see my article 'Khambāyat', *E.I.*, 2; cf. also Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 86).

(11) This is Sahwan (Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 372).

(12) Sadūsān is Sīvastān and lay to the west of Manjābrī (identified with Bhanbhōr, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 93), perhaps between Sahwan and the Indus (Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 372; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 102). Baloch identifies Sīvastān of *Fatḥnāma-i Sind* with Sahwan (p. 454). According to Yāqūt, (*Mu'jam*, III, p. 301), Sivastān was a big district of Sind and the first limit of India situated on the Indus.

(13) Rāsk lies on the middle course of the river Sarbāz, but the original Rāsk lay probably more to the north of the site of the town of Sarbāz (Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 373).

(14) This is Arōṛ, the ancient capital of Sind. According to Baloch, the original form of this name before the arrival of Islam was most probably Rūd, which in Persian means a 'river'. The Indus was called 'Mihrān rūd' in old Persian. Since the Indus divided itself into two branches near this town, it came to be known as Rūd in relation to the eastern branch of the river. Baloch says that, according to Muḥibb Allāh Bakkharī, this town was built by a merchant named Mahmās, son of Arūkh, son of Haylāj Armanī during the reign of Anūshērwān. Rūd then became Rōr in the local dialect, and the Arabs turned it into Al-Rōr which gave rise to the two pronunciations: Alōr and Arōr. Even in the present Sindhi dialect it is pronounced as Aror. The ruins of this town lie about three miles south-east of Rohri in the village Aror. It was the capital of Sind from the ancient times up to the beginning of the Arab period (till about A.H. 125/A.D. 743) after which Al-Manṣūra became the capital (*Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, pp. 362–64).

(15) Cf. Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 616–17: Sāwandrā; *Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, p. 308. The Sāwandā of Samma has been identified by Baloch with the village of Sāwarā, situated between Al-Manṣūra and Arōṛ and about two miles north-east of the Stupa called Thal Mir Rukn. It is situated on an old bed of the Indus, (*Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, pp. 502, 503).

(16) Sandān/Sindān is the '*Sanjam* of the Portuguese maps and *St. John* of English ones' and lay south of Daman in the Thana district of Bombay (Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 245); Hodivala places it fifty miles north of Thana (*I.M.H.*, p. 69).

(17) On *al-Mandal*, see Al-Balādhuri, *Futūḥ*, p. 621; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, V, p. 209. Yāqūt counts it as a town of India from where a superior quality of aloes-wood was imported. R.C. Majumdar and others have suggested the identification of Al-Mandal with Mandor near Viramgam (Kathiawar). See *The Classical Accounts of India*, p. 182. A Mandāl, just north of Viramgam, appears on *Road Map of India* (3rd ed.).

(18) On al-Baylamān, see Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 618, 621; Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, p. 316; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, I, p. 534. According to Yāqūt, the 'Baylamānīya' swords were attributed to this town. But, he says, it may be in Yemen. R.C. Majumdar and others have suggested the identification of this town with Vallamandala (*The Classical Accounts of India*, p. 182).

(19) Surasht is Sorashtra (Kathiawar); cf. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh: Surast*; Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 618: *Suras.nt*.

(20) Al-Kayraj has been identified with Kaira, probably the northern outpost of the ancient Kheṭaka-maṇḍala (K.M. Munshi, *Glory That Was Gujara-Deśa*, p. 140). By the end of the eighth century, Gujarat, up to and inclusive of Khetaka-Mandala, was a part of the empire of the Chālukyas (Munshi, ibid., p. 75; cf. Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 618, 621; Baloch, *Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, p. 465).

(21) Cf. Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 621: Marmad; Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, p. 316: Al-Marmadh. R.C. Majumdar and others have suggested its identification with Marwar (*op. cit.*, p. 182).

(22) Variation: Tali (I. Khur., p. 57, Note e.) According to Al-Balādhurī (*Futūḥ*, p. 621), Junayd sent an army to Uzayn (Ujjain) and Ḥabīb b. Marra with an army to al-Malba. Al-Ya'qūbī (*Ta'rīkh*, p. 316) also mentions al-Malba. It seems, therefore, that Qali/Tali of I. Khur. are mutilated forms of al-Malba which may be identified with Malwa.

(23) This name has two variations: Dahnaj and Rahnīj/

Rahnayj (I. Khur., p. 57 and Note f). Al-Balādhurī (*Futūḥ*, p. 621) gives Dahnaj. This town may be identified with Dahej, situated to the west of Broach, on the coast of the Gulf of Cambay.

(24) Barōṣ is modern Broach on the Gulf of Cambay.

VI 'Imrān b. Mūsā b. Yahyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī was the governor of Sind during the reign of Caliph al-Ma'mūn; see Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ṭa'rīkh*, pp. 458, 479.

VII(1) Thārā (*Bārā). Another reading of the name is Nār (I. Khur., p. 62, Note g). Al-Idrīsī places it near Sūbārah (old Sopara, near Bombay) and says it is small in size and grows a little coconut and costus (*Nuzhat*, Rome/Naples ed., p. 182). In his map, Al-Idrīsī places it south of Tīz of Makrān. This island cannot be identified.

(2) Fārs, the ancient Persis, is one of the provinces of Iran (Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 248).

(3) The name Mihrān, originally Persian, was applied by the Muslim geographers to the lower course of the Indus. According to Ḥamza, the original name in Persian was 'Mihrān-rūd'. According to Al-Mas'ūdī, the river was called Mihrān when, flowing down from the north, it reached the town of Rōr. Then, it divided into two branches, which reunited at Shākira (Mīrpūr Sākra) and from there the river flowed into the sea (*Murūj*, I, pp. 377–78). According to Al-Bīrūnī, it flowed into the sea at two places: one near the city of Loharānī and the other, more eastward, in the province of Kachch at a place called Sindhū-Sāgara (*A.I.*, p. 260). For further details, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 111; *Ḥ.'A.*, pp. 72, 209–10.

IX(1) The original form of 'Utkīn is probably Oykman, and the port may be identified with Okha situated on the northern coast of Kathiawar (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 119–21).

X(1) Al-Mayd were sea pirates who inhabited the coastal regions of Sindh and Kathiawar (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 118–19). Baloch points out that almost all the tribes who lived along

the coastal regions of Makran, Sindh and Kathiawar were called *Mēd* by the Arab historians, and the *Mēds* of Sindh were the sailors of the coastal region. The term *Mēh* which, according to him, is still used, is perhaps a mutilation of the word Mēd (*Fatḥnāma-i Sind*, pp. 427–29).

(2) Kūlī seems to correspond to Kodinar, north-west of Diu (Kathiawar). For further details, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 89–90.

(3) Mulay stands for Kulam Malay of the Muslim writers which is identified with Quilon (Kerala).

XI Black pepper is a perennial climbing shrub, *piper nigrum*, indigenous in the forests of Malabar and Travancore (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 133). The Arabic word for black pepper is *al-filfil* (< Skt. *pippli*).

XII(1) The location of Bullīn has not yet been fixed. In my commentary on Al-Idrīsī, I had suggested that this important mediaeval port seemed to have been situated in the neighbourhood of the Tanjore district (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 114–15). Now, if we compare the various readings of the name as given by Ibn Khurādẖbih (p. 63 and Note c), Al-Idrīsī (for variations, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 114) and Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, I, p. 73; *Balanz*, بَلَنز), Bullīn seems to be the most correct form. Originally, this form might have been Nikabattan (بِكَبَتّ), and in this case it would correspond to Negapatam (Nagapattinam) on the Tanjore coast. It was an important halting port for the Arab boats before they set sail for China or Bengal.

(2) Al-Lujjat al-'Uẓmā (the Great Fathomless Sea) refers to the Bay of Bengal.

(3) Bābattan has been identified by Nainar with Baliapatam (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 103, 105). But Minorsky places it south of the Coromandal coast.

(4) Sarandīb (<Skt. *Simhaladvīpa*, Sauvaget, *Akẖbār*, p. 36). According to Al-Bīrūnī (*A.I.*, I, p. 233), Sarandīb is *Sangaladīb* in the Indian language. This was the name used by Muslim geographers for Ceylon.

XIII(1) Yule identified Shinklī of Abu'l-Fidā and Dimashqī

with Cragnanore on the south-western coast of the peninsula. If we consider al-Sinjilī of I. Khur. and Sinjī of Idrīsī to be the same as Shinklī, then al-Sinjilī would lie on the south-western coast, and this would create difficulties of geographical position as well as distances. The itineraries of both I. Khur. and Al-Idrīsī point to a direction south-north along the eastern coast from Bullīn. Hence al-Sinjilī should be looked for along the eastern coast south of the mouth of the Godavari. A 'Ginjee' is shown on the map of India by T. Kitchin about forty-five miles (inland) to the north-east of Pondicherry, but this seems to be out of question for al-Sinjili is a coastal town. The exact identification of al-Sinjili, therefore, remains uncertain. (For a full discussion, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 103–04.)

(2) Al-Idrīsī mentions Kabashkān as Kl.ksār which resembles Kalaikarias of Ptolemy. This is identified with Cahlacory to the north-east of Kranganore (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 88, 105).

(3) Kūdāfarīd may be identified with the river Godavari, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 89, 104, 105.

(4–6) Minorsky has suggested the identification of Kaylakān with the Portuguese Calingham (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 241). Kanja has been identified with Ganjam by Minorsky, but Nainar identifies it with Conjeevaram (near Madras). According to him, it is old Kānchīpuram, the capital of the Čola kings. As for Kaylakān and al-Lawā, Nainar argues that these are inland towns between Kūdāfarīd (Aḷimukam near Cranganore) and Conjeevaram, but the time given to cover the distance, namely, two days, appears to be insufficient. I have preferred the text of Al-Idrīsī, according to which the distance from Klk.sār (I. Khur.: Kabashkān) to Klk.yān is covered by a day's journey, and that from Klk.yān to Lūlawā and Kanja, is covered by two days' journey (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 63). Al-Idrīsī has omitted the distance between Klk.sār/Kabashkān and Kūdafarīd which, according to I. Khur., is three *farsakh* (about nine miles or about a day's journey). So, the total distance between

Kabashkān and Kanja would be about four days. Al-Idrīsī seems to have utilized the earlier fuller edition of I. Khur's work, hence to get a fuller description of the itineraries of these terms I. Khur's extant text should be read along with that of Al-Idrīsī. It is, therefore, unlikely that Kaylakan and al-Lawā were inland towns. Kaylakan has been identified with Calingham (Calingapatam), but al-Lawā still remains unidentified. However, there is little doubt that all these towns should be placed along the eastern coast of India (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 86–87, 105).

(7) Minorsky places Samundar (<Samundra) north of Ganjam and south of the Rio de Paluro (Barua) on the authority of *Moḥīṭ*, Map I (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 241). According to Al-Idrīsī, the distance from Kanja to Samundar was thirty miles. It is described by him as an important port which was inhabited by wealthy people and had large markets. It formed part of the kingdom of Qinnauj. Aloes-wood, floated down in sweet water (river), was brought here from Kamarupa which lay at a distance of fifteen days' journey. He also mentions a large island facing it and situated at a distance of an hour's *majrā* (about one day's journey by sea). It was inhabited by people and merchants from all parts of the world, and from here to Ceylon it was four *majrā* (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 64). According to Al-Bīrūnī, the choicest aloes-wood was Indian, called *Samandarūk (Ṣifat*, p. 128). In the opinion of J.Ph. Vogel, Samundar (Ssk. *Samudra*, 'Sea', 'Ocean') seems to indicate the principal port in the Ganges delta (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 122). I have suggested that, if we place the town of Samundar near Ganjam, then the island described by Al-Idrīsī might stand for the Parikud island on the Chilka Lake (Ibid., p. 122). But this identification now seems to be far-fetched. The descriptions of the town and the island suggest their proximity to Assam because of the evidence of waterway between this town and Assam from where the aloes-wood was floated down to it. I am now of the opinion that this town may be identified with Sunur Kāwān (Sonargaon) mentioned by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (*Travels*, p. 271). The river referred to may then be the Meghna.

(8) Kāmrūn is Kamrup (Assam).

XIV(1) *Ūrīshīn has been identified with Orissa. Al-Idrīsī describes Ūrīsīn as a small town situated on the sea coast. But the island of the same name was very large, and had numerous mountains and plants. Elephants were found there in large numbers, and their tusks were exported. The island had iron mines, rhubard and a tree called *al-shahkīr* which resembled the castor-oil plant in quality, except that it was full of thorns (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 69, 71–72). Minorsky correctly points out that I. Khur.'s Ūrīshīn should be distinguished from Ūrshfīn as the author of *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam* 'clearly discriminates between the two localities respectively belonging to the queen Rāniya (**rānī*) and Dahum' (*Ḥ.'A.*, p. 243). The latter place lay in the extreme south, opposite Ceylon (*Ḥ.'A.*, pp. 243–44). I have suggested the identification of the island in question with the region lying north of the Mahanadi river. The word *jazīra* in Arabic can mean both an 'island' and a 'peninsula'. Al-Idrīsī's *jazīra* may stand for 'peninsula'. I have also suggested that the town of Ūrīshīn should be looked for somewhere in the neighbourhood of Puri. (For a full discussion, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 127–28.) But the only difficulty is that, if we identify Samundar with Sonargaon, then the town and the island of Ūrīshīn would be placed somewhere in Noakhali, for the distance between Samundar and Ūrīshīn as given by I. Khur. is twelve *farsakh* (about thirty-six miles).

(2) Abīna cannot be identified, but it should lie within the region of Bengal.

XVI(1) These are the Nicobar Islands. Ibn Mājid (*Kitāb al-Fawā'id*, f. 55a) refers to them as ناجبار (*Nāja-bārī* < Nanga = naked and vārī = belonging to the land of). (For a full discussion, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 117–18). According to Al-Idrīsī, it took ten days to sail from Sarandīb to Lankābālus (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 32).

(2) Kalah has been identified with Keda (Kra) in the Malay peninsula by de Goeje (see Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 187). Sauvaget

identifies Sulayman's Kalāh-bār/Kalah-bār with Kedah on the western coast of the Malacca peninsula at Lat. 6° N. He also mentions other possible locations of the port: Kra as preferred by Ferrand and Kĕlang, to the north of the city of Malacca (*Akhbār*, p. 43).

(3) In *Ḥ.'A.*, the Persian rendering of I. Khur.'s text runs thus: پارشای جابه‌ هندوست ('it is the kingdom of the Indian Jāba'), see *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 57, and Note 2. In Minorsky's opinion, the 'Indian (or Brahmanic?) Jāba' of I. Khur is in contradistinction from the other Jāba (Chamba) of I. Khur and of *Ḥ.'A.* whose author calls the latter continental Jāba (مملکت جابهٔ خشک) (*Ḥ.'A.*, pp. 63, 187–88). Our author's 'Indian Jāba' is the same as Zabaj of other Arab writers and represents Java (see my article 'Djāba' in *E.I.*, p. 352).

XVII Qimār is the Arabicized form of Khmer, *i.e.* Cambodia on the Me Kong. The king of Khmer referred to here may be identified with the founder of the empire, Jayavarman II (A.D. 802–69) (see Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, pp. 51–153).

XVIII(1) This is the Arabic plural of *al-ghubb* which, according to Al-Bīrūnī, means 'the spot where the sea enters the land, and boats avoid such a spot as the quantity of water is small' (*Ṣifat*, p. 71). The region of al-Aghbāb or al-Akhwār (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 36) is identified with the Gulf of Manar and the Strait of Palk (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 112–13).

XIX(1) Al-Kumkam stands for Konkan (coastal region of Maharashtra). I. Khur. seems to have confused the seat of the kingdom of the Rāshṭrakūtas Malkhēd (south of Gulbarga) with Konkan. See Book I, XIX above.

(2) For al-Ṭāqā, see Book I, I, 3 above.

(3) For Jāba see Book I, I, 2 above.

(4) For al-Jurz, see Book I, I, 4 above.

(5) The *Ṭāṭarīya dirham* (Greek: *tetradrachma* was one-eighth of a *dirham* according to Ibn Ḥauqal, and one two-third of it according to al-Iṣṭakhrī and al-Maqdisī. The usual weight of the *dirham* in the Islamic period was 2.97 grammes (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 154). According to Sulaymān

(*Akhbār*, p. 13), 'L'instrument des échanges commerciaux est chez eux l'argent en lingots' (وينبايعون بالفضّة التبر). Al-Idrīsī omits this information, (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 36); Marvazī says: 'Business with them is done by means of pieces of gold and the *dirhams* called *ṭāṭīrī* with the king's effigy on them, each *dirham* weighing one *mithqāl*' (*Marvazī*, p. 47; cf. I. Rusta, p. 135). However, it is very unlikely that the *ṭāṭīrī dirhams* were the currency of the Gūrjara Kingdom. The word may be a corruption of 'al-Lārīya' (اللارية) which would refer to Lār (Gujarat).

(6) Ghābah (= Jābah), see Book I, I, 5 above.

(7) Rahmā (Dharma), see Book I, I, 6 above.

(8) According to Marvazī, gold in lumps like a man's palm was found in Qāmarūn (Kāmrup, Assam) (*Marvazī*, p. 48). The anonymous author of *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam*, (p. 86) also refers to the existence of numerous gold mines in Kāmrup, and Al-Mas'ūdī also mentions that gold was found in the Kingdom of Rahmā (Dharma, Bengal) (*Murūj*, I, p. 385). *Marvazī* also mentions that in *Zamīn-i-zar* (land of gold), the farthest limit of the Sofala of India (?) (Sopara near Bombay), gold grew like grass, but merchants went there only at night for fear of the ants which were of the size of a dog (*Marvazī*, Ar. Text, p. 51). Commenting on this information, Minorsky observes that perhaps the author had Assam in view, but in his view this was merely a legend (*Marvazī*, p. 90, and Note 2).

(9) On rhinoceros in the Kingdom of Dharma, Sulaymān says that one could buy all these in his kingdom with cowry coins (*Akhbār*, pp. 13–14).

XX(1) Sām.l (variation: سابل) may stand for Qāmuhul as suggested by M.J. de Goeje (I. Khur., p. 68, Note n). Qāmuhul has been identified by me with Bhillamāla (بهلّمال) (Bhinmal) of Bīrūnī (*Sifat*, ed. Togan, p. 16). Bhinmal is in the Jaswantpura district of the State of Jodhpur, Rajasthan. (For a fuller discussion, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 91–93).

(2) Hūr.y.n. I. Khur.'s *Hūr.y.n.* should correspond to Maurydas of Al-Idrīsī (*Nuzhat*, ed. Rome/Naples, p. 195). The first part of the name, موری may stand for 'Maurya' and

دس for 'deśa'; thus it will be Maurya-deśa. According to Al-Idrīsī, Mauryadas was situated at three days' journey from Dadah (Dhar) and eight days' journey from al-Qandhār (Ghandara, Gujarat). It was a well protected and populated town with merchants, and army guarding the frontier of Kabul. It was at the foothills of a high mountain whose summit was difficult of access, and had *qanā* and bamboos in it. The town may be sought in Malwa. (?). The Maurya dynasty held Malwa among their western provinces (*I.G.I.*, Vol. XVII, p. 101).

(3) Qālun (variations: مالون - بالون) may be a mutilation of 'Malwa'.

(4) Qandhār is Ghāndhāra situated in the eastern corner of the Gulf of Cambay (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 99).

(5) Here Qashmīr may refer to Addishtān, the ancient capital of Kashmir. (For a commentary on Al-Idrīsī's description of Kashmir, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 99–100.) The first report prepared by the envoy of Yaḥyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī, as related by Gardīzī, says: 'The people of India are skilful, clever and shrewd. They make good and subtle things. From their midst come many sages, especially in the province of Kashmir.' It is not improbable that the envoy also visited the Valley of Kashmir during the reign of either Samgramapida II (A.D. 797–801) or Cippatajayapida (A.D. 801–813) (S. Maqbul Ahmad and Raja Bano, *Historical Geography of Kashmir*, p. 5).

XXII The original report on Indian religions and the caste system was prepared about A.D. 800 by the envoy of Yaḥyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī. The report prepared in Arabic was utilized by several later writers. Among the earliest to use this report were Ya'qūb b. Isḥāq al-Kindī (*d.* A.D. 873), then our author Ibn Khurdādhbih and Muḥammad b. Shaddād b. 'Īsā (*d.* A.H. 248 or 258/A.D. 862 or 871). Ibn Khurdādhbih's report was utilized by Al-Jayhānī in his work *al-Masālik wa'l-mamālik* which is not extant, and Gardīzī utilized it from Al-Jayhānī. Al-Jayhānī used Ibn Khurdādhbih's more complete work which is lost, and it is for this reason that we

find only extracts of the report in the extant abridged edition of I. Khur.'s work. (For full discussion on the report, see S. Maqbul Ahmad and Raja Bano, *Historical Geography of Kashmir*, pp. 3–10; cf. S. Maqbul Ahmad, *Indo-Arab Relations*, pp. 107–10.

It is difficult to comprehend why the author of the original report divided the Indian castes into seven which included the four main castes as well as the low castes. The figure seven seems to have been of some significance for him. Could it be that he was an Ismā'īlī who gave considerable importance to numbers in their philosophy.

Al-Shākthariya. Gardīzī recorded this name as *Sakabatrī*. If this name is to be identified with Chakravarti, a royal title, then it should not be treated as a caste name. But if it is to be identified with *Śākyaputra* (Buddhist priests), then it would suggest that the rulers referred to in the original report were Buddhists (see S. Maqbul Ahmad and Raja Bano, *Historical Geography of Kashmir*, pp. 5–6). *Al-Barāhima* are the Brahmans. *Al-Ksatrīya* are the Ksatrīyas. *Al-Shūdarīya* are the Śūdras. *Al-Bayshīya* are the Vaiśyas. *Al-Sandālīya* are the Caṇḍālas. *Al-Dhunbīya* are the Dombas (cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 145–49).

XXIII The original report as related by Gardīzī divided the religious beliefs and philosophies of the Indians into ninety-nine divisions which could be reduced to forty-two varieties, and their basic foundations were fourfold. In Ibn Khurdādhbih's categories, those who believe in the Creator and the Prophets may be identified with the Brāhmans. Those who reject the Prophets were the *Śyāmanas*. The beliefs were those of the Hinayna Buddhists (cf. S. Maqbul Ahmad and Raja Bano, *op. cit.*, p. 7).

XXIV According to Gardīzī, the Indians practised charms (*afsūn*), telepathy, fancies and showed phantoms at which the great sages were perplexed. They practised *Sīmāband* (talisman) and recited incantations (*Khwānish*, 'hymns'?) by the help of which they stopped hails. In this they made contracts with the villagers to protect them from it. They also

cured snake-bites by the same methods. (S. Maqbul Ahmad and Raja Bano, *op. cit.*, p. 6).

XXV Mihrān is the name used by the Islamic geographer for the Indus. Obviously, I. Khur.'s knowledge of the sources of the Indus was faulty when he placed its source in the mountains of Shiqinañ (the whole wedge of Afghan territory round which the Oxus sweeps to the north-west of the Pamir, Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 364). I. Khur. makes another blunder when he counts the Indus as a branch of the Oxus (Jayḥūn). I. Khur. points out the place near the town of Khuttal 'where the merchants reach the top of a mountain situated on the bank of the Oxus (right bank?)'. There they make signals to the people of Shikinān and the latter arrive with camels specially trained for fording the river. A contract is then made with the merchants and the camel-men recross the river. 'Thereupon every merchant takes his route travelling towards China or Multān.' I. Khur. adds that the said ford is situated at three and a half days' distance (?) from the place where the Oxus splits into two branches of which one is supposed to flow towards Sind and the other is the Jayḥūn (Oxus) (Minorsky, *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 363).

BOOK TWO

Akhbār Al-Ṣīn wa'l-Hind

(An Account of China and India)

I Text

(1) In this [sea][1] is found a fish that appears occasionally. It has herbs and shells growing on its back. The captains of boats, sometimes, lay anchor against it thinking it to be an island, but when they realize their mistake they set sail from it. Sometimes, when this fish spreads out one of its two wings on its back, it appears like the sail of a ship. When it raises its head above water, you can see it as an enormous object. Sometimes it blows out water from its 'mouth', which resembles a lofty tower. Whenever the sea is calm and the fishes gather together, it collects them round with the help of its tail. Then it opens its mouth and the fishes dive into its belly as if diving into a well. The boats sailing on this sea are scared of it, so during the nightfall they blow the trumpets resembling those of the Christians, for they are afraid that it might lean heavily against their boat and cause it to be drowned.

(2) This sea has a fish that we have caught. It is twenty cubits long. Then we opened up its stomach and took out from inside another fish belonging to the same species; and when we opened up the stomach of this second one, we again found a similar [fish] inside it. Each one of these was alive and wriggling and resembled one another in shape. This huge fish called *al-wāl*,[1] even though it has an enormous constitution, has an [enemy] fish called *al-lashk*,[2] which is about a cubit long. Thus, whenever this fish (*al-wāl*) becomes violent and oppressive and starts doing harm to the other fishes of the sea, this small fish sets against it and, sticking itself at the root of its gill (lit. ear), does not leave it till it has killed it. It [small fish] usually clings to the boat, so this large fish does not come near the boat to avoid the small one.

(3) There is another fish in this sea whose face, it is related, resembles that of a human being. It flies above water. This fish is called *al-mīj*.[1] There is another fish that lies in wait for

it under water, and as soon as it drops this fish swallows it. It is called *al-'anqatus*.[2] All the fishes eat up each other.

(4) The third sea is the Sea of Harkandh.[1] Between it and the Sea of Lārvī,[2] there are numerous islands.[3] It is said that they are one thousand and nine hundred islands, and they mark the boundaries of these two seas, namely, Lārvī and Harkandh. These islands are ruled by a woman.[4] On these islands ambergris of enormous sizes is thrown up; sometimes each piece is as big as a house or so. Ambergris[5] grows as a plant in the sea bed, and whenever the sea is in commotion it throws it up from its bottom like the mushroom or truffle. In these islands, ruled by the woman, coconut palms grow in abundance. The distance between one island and the other is two, three or four *farsakh*, and each one of these is inhabited by people and has coconut palms. Their wealth consists of cowry shells and the queen hoards them in her treasury. It is said that no one can surpass the inhabitants of these islands in skill to the extent that they make the chemises out of a single piece woven together with the two sleeves, the two gores and the collar.[a] They build boats and houses and work with similar skill in the manufacture of other industries. The cowry shell comes above the surface of water when it is alive; so a branch of the coconut palm is taken and thrown on the surface of the water, and the cowry shell clings to it. They call it *al-kastaj*.[6]

(5) The last of these islands in the Sea of Harkand is Sarandib[1] which is the principal of these islands which they call al-Dībajāt. On one of its sides there are pearl-diving beds; it is surrounded by the sea on all the sides. On it there is a mountain called al-Ruhūn.[2] It was on this [mountain] that Adam, may peace be upon him, had descended. His footmark is found imprinted on the flat part of the summit of this mountain, and it is said that he, may peace be upon him, placed the other

[a] The term used by the author is *al-dikhrīṣayn*, sing. *dikhrīṣ*, patch for widening shirt. Al Idrīsī uses the term *banā'iq*, sing. *bināqa* or *banīqa*, used in al-Maghrib (*Nuzhat*, Rome/Naples, p. 70).

step faultily into the sea. It is also said that the footmark imprinted on the summit of the mountain is about seventy cubits long. Around this mountain there are mines of precious stones: rubies, topaz and the blue sapphire. In this island there are two kings.[3] It is a large and spacious island and produces aloes-wood, gold and precious stones. In its sea are found pearls and *al-shank*[4] which is the trumpet which the people blow and is one of the objects collected by them.

(6) In this sea, when one sails for Sarandib, one comes across islands which are not numerous but are spread over wide distances and cannot be enumerated accurately. Among these is an island called al-Rāmnī[1] which has a number of kings ruling over it. Its area, it is said, covers 800 or 900 *farsakh*. It has gold mines and another mine called Fanṣūr[2] from where the excellent quality of camphor comes. These islands are followed by other islands: one of these is the island called al-Niyān;[3] they have plenty of gold here and the staple food of the people consists of the coconut palm which they use as condiment and oil. When an inhabitant of this island wishes to get married, he cannot do so unless he produces the skull of a man who is one of their enemies; if he kills two of them, he can marry two [women]; similarly, if he kills fifty [men], he marries fifty women by [producing] fifty skulls. The reason for this [custom] is that they [inhabitants of the island] have numerous enemies, so anyone who takes the initiative of killing the largest number is appreciated most by them. In this island—I mean al-Rāmnī—elephants are found in large numbers, and it has brazil-wood and bamboos. It also has a tribe[4] who are cannibals. This [island] spreads between two seas, namely, Harkand and *Salāḥṭ*.[5]

(7) After this there are islands called Lanjabālūs. They have a large population, and both men and women live naked except that the pudenda of the women is covered by a leaf of the tree. Whenever the boats pass by them, they come to them in small and large canoes, and sell to the passengers ambergris and coconut in exchange for iron and clothes that they need, for they have neither heat nor cold.

(8) On the other side of these [islands] there are two islands, and between them there is the sea. They are called Andāmān. Their inhabitants are cannibals. They are black with curly hair, and have ugly faces and eyes and long legs. Each one has a pudenda, that is to say, his penis, nearly a cubit long; and they are naked. They have no canoes; and if they had them, they would have eaten up anyone passing by them. Sometimes it so happens that the boats slow down, and their speed is retarded due to the [strong] wind. The [drinking] water in the boats gets used up; and so they [sailors] approach these (islands) and refill the water. Hence, sometimes they [the cannibals] capture some of them [the sailors], but most of them escape.

(9) Next to these islands, there are mountains which are not situated along the [main] sea route. It is said that they have silver mines and are not inhabited. And not every boat aiming to reach them finds them. It was one of these mountains called al-Khushnāmī that gave an indication [of their existence]. Once a boat passed by it and they [the sailors] saw the mountain; so they sailed for it, and when it was morning they reached it in a skiff to collect fire-wood; and when they lighted the fire the silver melted; so they realized that it was a mine. They then carried whatever quantity they wanted to, and when they boarded the ship the sea became rough; so they threw overboard all that they had taken of it. Later, some people organized an expedition to this mountain, but they could never recognize it again. In this sea there are innumerable prohibited islands of this kind which the sailors do not know of, and there are some which they cannot reach.

(10) Sometimes in this sea one notices a white cloud casting its shadows on the boats; then a long thin tongue begins to appear from it until this tongue joins the water of the sea. So, because of this, the sea water starts agitating like a hurricane, and when the hurricane overtakes the boat, it swallows it up. Then the cloud disappears, and it starts raining with the rain water containing garbage of the sea. I am not aware if the cloud

draws water from the sea, or how this happens.[1] In each one of these seas there is a [strong] wind that blows, causing stir and commotion until it agitates like the boiling of the urn, and then throws out its contents onto the islands round it. It smashes the boats and throws out large dead fish and bones; sometimes it throws down rocks and mountains just as a bow shoots off an arrow. But in the Sea of Harkand the wind is different from this, it [blows] between the west and the Constellation of Ursa, as a result of which the sea boils like the boiling of the urns and large quantities of ambergris are thrown out; and the denser and deeper the sea is the more refined is the ambergris. And when the waves of this sea—I mean Harkand—are very high, you can see them burning like fire.[2] In this sea there is a fish called al-Lukham;[3] actually it is a beast that swallows up people.

(11) All this is in their hands and for this reason their merchandise is rare. One of the reasons of the scarcity of the merchandise is the fire which occurs quite often at Khānfū. It is a haven for the boats and a market-place of Arab and Chinese commerce. It is for this reason that the merchandise catches fire. This is because here their houses are built of wood and split bamboos. One of the reasons [of scarcity] is that the incoming and the outgoing boats get wrecked or get plundered or are compelled to call at a place for a long time; so they sell their merchandise in countries other than those of the Arabs. Sometimes the wind carries them to Yemen and other places, and they sell their goods there. Again, sometimes they prolong their stay for repair of their boats; there are other reasons besides these.

(12) Sulaymān, the merchant, relates that in Khānfū, which is the meeting place of the merchants, a Muslim is made an arbitrator by the ruler of China to settle the disputes arising among the Muslims visiting this region; this is what the King of China desires. When it is 'Īd he offers prayers with the Muslims and delivers the *Khuṭba* and prays for the Sulṭān of the Muslims. And that in the discharge of his authority the merchants of 'Irāq do not deny his orders or his practice of

what is right or what is found in the Book of God, the High and Almighty, and of the injunctions of Islam.

(13) As for the places which they reach they relate that most of the Chinese boats are loaded at Sīrāf[1] and that the goods are carried to Sīrāf from al-Baṣra, 'Umān and other [ports], and then they are loaded on the Chinese boats at Sīrāf. This is because the waves are abundant in this sea and the water is at a low [level] in some places. The distance between al-Baṣra and Sīrāf by sea is one hundred and twenty *farsakh*. So when the goods are loaded at Sīrāf, they store sweet water from there and set sail (*Khaṭafū*) . . . and this is the word used by the sailors, which means that 'they sail the ship' for a place called Masqaṭ which is the last of the territory of 'Umān. The distance from Sīrāf to this place is about two hundred *farsakh*. To the eastern side of this sea, between Sīrāf and Masqaṭ, are situated the lands of Banī al-Ṣaffāq[2] and the Island of Abarkāwān[3]. In this sea are the mountains of 'Umān, and around them is situated the spot called al-Durdūr.[4] It is a narrow passage (*maḍīq*) between two mountains which the small boats cross, but the Chinese boats do not cross it. It has the two mountains which are called Kusayr, and 'Uwayr and only a small part of it is visible above water. So when we cross the mountains we reach a place called Ṣuḥār of 'Umān. Then we store water from a well at Masqaṭ. Here one finds sheep in large numbers brought from 'Umān.

(14) Then, from there the boats set sail for India destined for Kūlam Malay,[1] and the journey from Masqaṭ to Kūlam Malay, with moderate winds, is of one month. At Kūlam Malay there is a military post belonging to the land of Kūlam Malay where taxes are collected from the Chinese boats. It has sweet water wells. From the Chinese [boats] one thousand *dirhams* are collected, and from the other boats [the collection is] between ten and twenty *dināṛs*. Between Masqaṭ, Kūlam Malay and the Harkand [Sea] it is about one month's [journey]. At Kūlam Malay they store sweet water. Then the boats are 'snatched away' . . . that is to say, [they] set sail . . . for the Sea of Harkand. After crossing it they reach a place

called Lanjabālūs. [Its inhabitants] do not understand Arabic nor any of the languages which the merchants know. These people do not wear any clothes. They are white and scanty-bearded.[2] They [the sailors] relate that they have never seen their womenfolk. This is because it is the men who come out to them from the island in canoes carved out of a single piece of wood. They carry with them coconut, sugar-cane, bananas and coconut wine.[3] This is a kind of drink (*sharāb*), white in colour. When it is taken soon after it is extracted from the palm-tree, it tastes sweet like honey; but if it is left for an hour, it turns into wine (*sharāban*), and if it is left for some days, it turns into vinegar. They sell it in exchange for iron. Sometimes a little quantity of ambergris is found by them which they sell in exchange for a piece of iron. They carry on commercial transactions by signs, exchanging things by hand, for they do not understand the language. They are expert swimmers. Sometimes, they carry away the iron forcibly from the merchants and do not give them anything [in return].

(15) Then the boats set sail for a place called Kalāhbār.[1] This kingdom and the whole coast is called *bār*. This is the Kingdom of al-Zābaj,[2] which is to the right of India. A king rules over the whole group of them [the people]. Their dress consists of the waist-wrappers (*al-fuwaṭ*).[3] Both the high and the low wear a single waist-wrapper. Here they [the sailors] store water from sweet-water wells; they prefer the water of the wells to that of the springs and rain. The distance between Kūlam [Malay] and [Kalāh] is not much: from Harkand to Kalahbār it is one month's [journey]. Then the boats sail for a place called Tiyūmah[4] which has sweet water for any one desiring it, and the journey to it is of ten days. Then the boats set sail for a place called Kanduranja[5] for ten days; it has sweet water for anyone wanting [to collect it]. This is the case with all the islands of India; if wells are dug there, one discovers sweet water in them. There is a lofty mountain there which at times is used as a refuge by the slaves and the thieves.

(16) Then the boats sail for a place called Ṣanf,[1] a journey of ten days. It has sweet water and from here is acquired the

Ṣanfī aloes-wood; it is ruled by a king. The [inhabitants] are brown-coloured, and everyone wears two waist-wrappers. After storing sweet water from there, they [sailors] sail for a place called Ṣanf Fulāu,[2] an island in the sea, and the journey to it is of ten days. It has sweet water. Then the boats sail for a sea called Ṣankhā[3] on the way to the Gates of China. These are mountains in the sea. Between each of the two mountains of the sea, there is a passage through which the boats pass. So, when they cross from Ṣanf Fulāu in safety with the help of God, the boats sail for China for a month, but the mountains which the boats pass by are of seven days' journey. So when the boat crosses the gates and enters the river, it reaches sweet water at a place in China where it anchors. This is called Khānfū; it is a city. Throughout China sweet water is [found] in every region; there is sweet water in the rivers and the valleys, at the military posts and in the markets.

(17) In this [sea], the ebb and flow of water takes place twice in the day and night. However, from the neighbourhood of al-Basra up to the Island of Abarkāwān,[1] the ebb [of water] occurs when the moon reaches the middle of the sky [and meets the centre of the sky], and the flow occurs when the moon rises and sets. And in the region of China up to very near the Island of Abarkāwān, the ebb takes place when the moon rises, and when it reaches the middle of the sky, flow occurs in the water; and when it sets, ebb takes place, and when it is opposite the centre of the sky, flow takes place.[2]

(18) They [sailors] have related that, in an island called Maljān [situated] between Sarandīb and Kalah which is a part of India in the eastern part of the sea, there live members of a Black tribe who go completely naked. If they find a stranger in their land, they hang him upside down and cut him into pieces and then eat him up raw. Their number is very large and they all live on one island. They have no king. Their food consists of fish, banana, coconut and sugar-cane. They have places where they take shelter in thickets and forests like the beasts.

(19) They have related that in a part of the sea a small flying

fish is found which flies above the surface of water and is called 'the water-bat'.[1] They have related that in another part of the sea there is a fish that comes out [of water] and climbs the coconut tree; it then drinks the water of the coconut and then returns back [into] the sea.[2] They have also related that in the sea there is found an animal resembling the crab and if it comes out of the sea it turns into a stone.[3] They have said that from this [stone] they prepare collyrium for some of the diseases of the eye.

(20) They have related that near al-Zābaj there is a mountain called the Mountain of Fire. It is not possible to go near it. In the day time smoke is seen coming out of it, while at night there is a flame of fire. At its foothill there is a cool, sweet spring that flows out, and another hot and sweet spring.

(21) The dress of the people of China, young and old, consists of silk during winter as well as summer. As for the kings they wear fine silk. Those below them [wear] what they can afford. In winter, they wear two, three, four, five and even more trousers (*Sarāwīl*) according to what they can afford. Their objects is to keep the lower parts [of their body] warm due to intense cold which they fear. But in summer they wear a single silk shirt or something like that. They do not wear turbans.

(22) Their food consists of rice, and sometimes they cook *kūshān*[1] [stew] which they pour over the rice and then eat it. The members of royal houses eat wheat bread and meat of all the animals and pork and [meat] of other [animals]. Among the fruits they have apple, peach, citron, pomegranate, quince (*safarjal*), pear, banana, sugar-cane, melon, fig, grape, cucumber, glossy cucumber (*Khiyār*), crab-apple (*nabq*), walnut, almond, hazel-nut, pistachio, plum (*ijjās*), apricot, sorb and coconut. They do not have in their country many date-palms except a [solitary] date-palm tree in the house of one of them. Their drink consists of the intoxicating drink [*al-nabīdh*] prepared from rice. They do not have wine in their country, nor is it exported to them. They neither know about it, nor do they drink it. It is from rice that vinegar, the

intoxicating wine, sweetmeat (*nāṭif*) and things resembling them are prepared.

(23) They are not a clean people. They do not use water when they excrete but wipe it with the Chinese papers.[1] They eat dead [animals] and things which resemble the practice of the Magians, for their religion has resemblance with that of the Magians.[2] Their women keep their hair uncovered and put combs in them. Sometimes, a woman puts on twenty combs of ivory and other material. The men cover their heads with a thing resembling *al-qalānis* (hats). Their custom relating to the thieves is that if the chief is apprehended he is killed.

INFORMATION ON INDIA AND CHINA AND ON THEIR KINGS

(24) The Indians and the Chinese are in agreement that the number of the kings of the world is four. The first of these four that they count is the king of the Arabs. There is a consensus amongst them, and there is no difference of opinion in that he is the greatest of the kings; that he is the richest and the most magnificent; and that he is the king of the great faith above which there is nothing else. Then the king of China counts himself as the next [king] after the king of the Arabs; then the king of al-Rūm; then Ballaharā, the king of the [people] whose ears are perforated.

(25) As for this Ballaharā,[1] verily he is the noblest among the Indians, and they acknowledge his nobility. Each one of the kings of India is the sovereign of his own country, but they acknowledge his suzerainty. Thus, when his ambassadors visit other kings, they pay homage to his ambassadors as a mark of respect for him. This king pays allowances [to the soldiers] as the Arabs do. He possesses a large number of horses and elephants and has abundance of riches. His wealth consists of *dirhams* called *al-Ṭāṭarīya*. Each *dirham* weighs a *dirham* and a half of the royal currency. The date of his [reign] in the year of his rule is (determined) by the death of

the previous [ruler]. It is unlike the tradition of the Arabs whose [calendar is determined] from the period of the Prophet (May Peace be Upon Him). On the other hand, their calendar is [fixed] according to [the reign] of the kings. Their kings have long lives, and sometimes a king rules for fifty years. The inhabitants of the kingdom of Ballaharā assert that it is because of their love for the Arabs that their rule lasts for such a long period and that they have such ripe ages. Among the kings there is no one who loves the Arabs so intensely; this is also the case with the inhabitants of his kingdom. Ballaharā is the name of each of their kings, like Kisrā and the like. But it is not necessarily applied in every case. The kingdom of Ballaharā and his land begins from the sea-shore which country is called Kumkam,[2] extending overland up to China. Around him there are many kings who wage wars against him, but he gains victory over them.

(26) Among them there is a king who is called the king of al-Jurz.[1] He has a large army, and none [of the kings] of India has a cavalry comparable to his. He is an enemy of the Arabs, but he acknowledges that the king of the Arabs is the greatest king. And among the Indian [kings] none is a greater enemy of Islam than he is. His [kingdom] lies on 'a tongue of the land'.[2] The kingdom has abundance of wealth and numerous camels and cattle. The commercial means of exchange in it are the silver ingots,[3] and it is said that the kingdom has [silver] mines.[4] There is no place in India more secure than this from theft.

(27) In his neighbourhood is the King of al-Ṭāqā whose kingdom is small. Their women are fair coloured, and are the most beautiful women of India. This king has peaceful relations with those around him, for he has a small army; and he loves the Arabs as Ballaharā does.

(28) Adjacent to them is a king called Dharma[1] with whom the king of al-Jurz wages wars, but he is not superior in sovereignty; he also carries on wars with Ballaharā as he does with the king of al-Jurz. This Dharma has a larger army as compared to the King Ballaharā, the king of al-Jurz and the

King al-Ṭāqā. It is said that when he goes out for a combat he carries about fifty thousand elephants, and he does not go [to war] except in the winter season, for the elephants cannot endure thirst. Hence he is not able to go [to war] except in winter. It is said that the number of the washermen of his army is about ten to fifteen thousand. In his country one finds cloth, the like of which is not found in any other [kingdom]. A piece of this cloth can be passed through the circle of a ring as it is so fine and beautiful. It is made of cotton, and we have seen some of them.[2] In his country cowry-shell is used which is the money of the land, that is to say, his wealth. In his country there is also gold, silver, aloes-wood and *al-ṣamar*[3] cloth from which the fly-whisk is made.

In his country is also found the marked *al-bishān*[4] and that is *al-karkaddan*.[5] It has a single horn on the frontside of its forehead, and inside the horn one finds the impression of the image of a creature, for example, the image resembling a human being. The horn is all black and the image inside it is white. In stature this rhinoceros is smaller than the elephant and tends to be black in colour. It resembles the buffalo and is strong; no animal commands the same strength as he does. It has no joints in its knees nor in its forelegs. From its legs up to its arm-pit it is one [solid] piece, and the elephant runs away from it. It ruminates like the oxen and the camels, and its meat is allowed [to be eaten], and we have eaten it. It is found in large numbers in the forests of this kingdom, and is found all over India except that the horns of this [particular type] are excellent. Sometimes one finds inside the horn the image of a man, a peacock, a fish or other images. The Chinese manufacture girdles out of it. The price of a single girdle in China goes up to two thousand, three thousand or even more, *dīnārs* depending upon the beauty of the picture. All this is purchased in the kingdom of Dharma with cowry which is the money of this kingdom.

(29) Next to him is a king whose [kingdom] is in the interior. He has no [access] to the sea. He is called the King of Lakshmibur. The [inhabitants of this realm] are white people; they have pierced ears and are handsome. They are the dwellers of deserts and mountains.

(30) This is followed by a sea which is ruled by a king called al-Tanluwing. He is poor but arrogant. He gets plenty of ambergris and has elephant tusks. He has black pepper which is eaten fresh because of its scarcity there.

(31) After this there are numerous kings whose actual numbers are known only to God, the Exalted and Supreme. Amongst them are [the kings] al-Mūja. They are white people and they dress like the Chinese. They have abundance of musk. In their land there are white mountains, and there is nothing higher than these. They wage war with numerous kings of the surrounding regions. The musk found in their land is of excellent quality and is mature (*bāligh*).[a]

(32) Behind them are the kings of al-Mādbud. They have a number of cities, and they extend up to al-Mūja. They are more numerous than [the kings of] al-Mūja. But [the kings] al-Mādbud resemble the Chinese more than they do [the kings of al-Mūja]. Like the Chinese they have eunuch slaves who act as financial agents (*'ummāl*) for them. Their land adjoins China. They are at peace with the Master of China, but they are not submissive to him. [The kings of] al-Mādbud send envoys and presents to the King of China every year, and similarly the King of China sends presents to them. Their country is vast. When the envoys of al-Mādbud enter the Chinese territory, they are guarded closely, for they [the Chinese] are afraid they might overrun their country because of their large number. Between them and China there are only mountains and valleys.

(33) It is said that the King of China has more than two hundred chief cities, each of which has a ruler and a eunuch; and each of the cities has several towns under its jurisdiction (lit. under it). One of the cities is Khānfū which is a port where the boats lay anchor. It has twenty towns under it. A place is called a city only if it has a *Jādum*.[1] The *Jādum* resembles a

[a] Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 14 ('efficient').

trumpet which is blown. It is long and has a girth which can be held in the two palms [of the hands] completely. It is coated with the same ointment (*dawā'*) as applied over plates. It is three to four cubits in length, and its top part (lit. head) is thin enough to be held by a man in his mouth. Its sound reaches about a mile. Then, every city has four gates, and on the top of every gate there are five *Jādums* which are blown at certain hours of the night and the day. Then, at the gate of every city there are ten drums which are beaten at the same time. This is done so as to pronounce their [cities] submission to the king. They also come to know by it the timings of the night and the day.[2] They also have other signs and measures to determine time.[3]

(34) They [the Chinese] conduct their transactions in cowries (lit. *fulūs*),[1] and their treasures are similar to those of the other kings. None of the kings except these has cowries which form the special currency of the land. They also have gold, silver, pearls, brocade and silk: all these they possess in abundance except that these form their property while the cowries are the currency. Their imports consist of ivory, incense, ingots of copper and *al-ḏhabl*[2] from the sea which is the skin of the backs of tortoises; then, this *al-bisḫān* which we have already described; it is *al-karkaddan*: they manufacture girdles with its horns. They possess numerous beasts of burden; they do not have the Arabian horse but other [breed]; they have donkeys and the two-humped camels in plenty. They have excellent cohesive green clay (*al-ġhaḍār*) out of which they manufacture goblets[3] as thin as the flasks, through which the sparkle of the water can be seen; it is made of *al-ġhaḍār*. When the sailors enter [China] from the sea, the Chinese hold their goods and store them in godowns, and leave them under the custody of police for six months till the next batch of sailors come in. Then, 3/10th of the goods is taken [as duty] and remaining part is restored to the merchants. Then, whatever the government wishes to take, buys at the highest price and pays the amount immediately, and in this transaction they do not act unjustly. They buy camphor

at the rate of fifty *fakkūj*[4] per maund, each *fakkūj* being equal to 1,000 cowries. If the government does not buy the camphor, it fetches half the price in other countries.

(35) When a Chinese dies he is not buried until the following year on the same day on which he dies. They place [the corpse] in a coffin and leave it in their houses; they treat it with quick-lime (*al-nūra*) which absorbs the water [from the body] and it is thus preserved. The [corpses of] the kings are, however, treated with aloes-essence and camphor. They mourn their dead ones for three years; anyone who does not mourn, whether it be a woman or a man, is beaten up with a cudgel. They tell him/her: 'Your dead one has never caused any grief to you?' The deceased are buried in graves similar to those of the Arabs. They do not withhold the food from the dead, for they assert that he [still] eats and drinks. This they do by placing the food [near the body] at night, and in the morning they do not find any of it left; so they say: 'He has eaten it.' They constantly weep and continue to feed him as long as the body is in their house, so much so that they turn pauper for the sake of their dead ones, and have neither cash nor kind left with them as everything is spent on [the deceased]. Formerly, they used to bury their kings along with his domestic paraphernalia, his clothes and girdles, which are of very high value. But now they have discarded this [practice], for one of the deceased was exhumed and whatever was [placed] with him was taken away.

(36) Everyone among the Chinese, whether he is poor or rich or young or old, learns calligraphy and the art of writing.

(37) The titles of their kings are in keeping with their status and the largeness of the towns. Thus, a king ruling over a small town is entitled *ṭasūshī (ts'eu-che)*[1] which means 'the maintainer of the town'. If the town is like Khānfū, then its ruler is entitled *dayfū (t'aī-fou)*.[2] The eunuch is called *ṭūqām*[3] *(tou-kien)*. Their eunuchs belong to their own race and are castrated. The chief justice (*qāḍ'il-quḍāt*) is called *luqshī ṣāmkūn shī*,[4] and [they have] such other titles whose exact forms I do not know.

(38) Among them no one becomes a ruler unless he is forty years of age, for they say that [at this age] a person becomes mature due to his experiences.[1] When a lesser king gives audience, he sits on a bench in a huge courtyard in his town, and in front of him another bench is placed; then [law] books containing rules governing the people are brought to him. Behind the king stands a person called *lunjūn* (*lang-tchong*).[2] If the ruler commits an error or a mistake [legally] in the orders that he issues, the [*lunjūn*] returns it to him. They do not pay any attention to any complaint made orally to them unless it is in writing. And before the plaintiff (*ṣāḥib-al-qiṣṣ*)[a] is presented in the audience of the king, a person who is stationed at the gate of the house looks into the written [complaints] of the person. If he finds that there is some mistake in it, he rejects it. Only a writer (*kātib*) who is acquainted with the laws (*ḥikam*) writes to the king. He mentions in his paper: 'So and so has written it.' Then, if it is found to be faulty, the writer is blamed, and he is punished with a cudgel. The king does not sit [in session] to mete out justice unless he eats and drinks beforehand, so that he may not commit an error. Every ruler receives his maintenance from the treasury of his town.

(39) As for the emperor, he is not seen except once in every ten months. He says:

> If people see me [often], they will have no regard for me, and authority cannot be maintained except through pride. This is because the common people do not know what justice is, so it is essential to practise force with them in order to establish our superiority among them.

(40) They have no land-taxes (*kharāj*), but they impose poll-tax (*jizya*) on every male head in accordance with their apparent [financial] conditions. If an Arab or someone else is there, then poll-tax on his goods is taken from him with a view to protecting his goods. Whenever there is a rise in prices, he [the king] releases food [food grains] from his stores and

[a] Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 17 ('il le carrige'].

sells it at a rate cheaper than the current prices in the market. Thus, inflation is averted. What is added to the treasury is, in fact, the poll-tax levied on each head. I believe that the [amount of money] added to the treasury every day in Khānfū is 50,000 *dinār*, even though it is not one of their larger towns.

(41) Among the important sources of revenue of the king are salt and an herb which they mix in hot water and then drink. It [the hot drink] is sold in every town at a very high price. It is called *al-sākh*. It is more leafy than the green trefoil and slightly more perfumed, and has a soury taste. [For preparing it] they boil water and then sprinkle the leaves over it. It is a cure for them for everything. All that goes into the treasury consists of the poll-tax, salt and this herb.

(42) Every town has a thing called *al-darā*. This is a bell placed near (lit. 'at the head of') the ruler of the town and is tied to a cord stretching as far as the road for the [benefit] of the common people. Between the king and its [outer end] there is a distance of about one *farsakh*. So if the cord is shaken even slightly the bell starts ringing. Thus, when any person who has been an object of injustice shakes this cord, the bell near the ruler starts ringing. So he is allowed to enter [the palace] to relate personally what the matter is and to explain the wrong done to him. Throughout the land it is like this.

(43) Anyone intending to travel from one place to the other has to have two documents: one from the king and the other from the eunuch. The royal document is meant for the journey and has the name of the person, names of the persons accompanying him, his age, age of his companion, and the name of his tribe [entered] in it. It is incumbent upon everyone living in China whether they be its inhabitants, Arabs or anyone else to trace back their origin to something for identification. As for the document issued by the eunuch, it contains a description of the money and the merchandise carried by the traveller. This is because along their route there are armed guards who examine the two documents. So, when anyone reaches them, they write: 'So and so son of so and so, belonging to such and such [a tribe] (*al-fulāniyy*), reached us on such

and such a day, such and such a month, and such and such a year, and he had such and such things with him.' This is done so that the money or the merchandise of the person does not get lost; if it does or if the person dies, it becomes known how it is lost, and it is returned to him or to his descendants after him.

(44) The Chinese act with justice in matters of transactions and debts. If a person has a debt against another person, he draws up a document binding him, and the indebted person also writes a document and signs it with the combined impression of his middle and index fingers. Then the two documents are joined together and folded completely; then something is written on the place where they are joined; then they are separated, and the person indebted is given his document containing his agreement. Then, if anyone of the two denies [the claim] of the other party, he is told 'present your document'. Then, if the indebted person asserts that there is no claim against him or refutes the contents of the document which is written in his hands and has his [finger] impression, and if the document of the rightful person is lost, then the denier against whom the claim exists is told: 'Bring a document saying that this claim is not against you, and, if the rightful person whom you have disputed brings evidence against you, then you are liable to be punished with twenty cudgels on the back and [a fine] of 20,000 *fakkūj* of cowries.'

One *fakkūj* is equal to one thousand cowries. This would be near about two thousand *dinār*, and the twenty cudgels are enough to kill him. No one in China would, therefore, dare give this [the document] for fear of losing life and money, and we have not come across anyone responding to this demand. They do full justice in respect of each other, and no one loses a [just] claim. They do not have witnesses or trustees in their transactions.

(45) If a person, by becoming insolvent, has lost the money of others and the creditors have got him imprisoned in the government prison at their expense, his confession is recorded. After he passes a month in the prison the king takes him out,

and a proclamation is made about him: 'Verily, this so and so son of so and so has become insolvent with the money of so and so son of so and so.' Then, if it is discovered that he has a deposit with someone or has landed property or slaves or any means by which he could have covered the debt, he is taken out [of the prison] every month and is punished with cudgels on his buttocks, for he stayed in the prison eating and drinking [at the expense of the creditors] while he had money. He is beaten; whether anyone acknowledges that he possesses wealth or not, in any case he is beaten. He is told: 'You have nothing to do except to usurp the rights of the people and to get away with it?' He is told: 'You have appropriated for yourself the rights of these people.' Then, if he has no way out [to reimburse the money taken by him] and the authorities ascertain that he possesses nothing, the creditors are summoned and they are paid from the Treasury of *al-Baghbūr*—he is the emperor and is entitled *al-Baghbūr* which means 'Son of the Heaven', but we call him *al-Maghbūr*. Then a proclamation is made: 'If anyone has any transaction with this [man], he is liable to be punished with death.' Thus, no one loses his money. And if it is found out that he has his money with someone and the person with whom it is deposited has not confessed it, then he is beaten to death with the cudgel, and nothing is left (*yuqal*) for the owner of the money. The money is taken and distributed among the creditors, and after that no transaction is made with him.

(46) They have a fixed stone ten cubits in length on which is carved a description of the various diseases and their cures: for such and such a disease, there is such and such a medicine. If a person is poor, he is given the price of the medicine from the treasury.

(47) They do not impose land-tax on their lands; [tax] is collected per head on the basis of personal possession of wealth and land. If a son is born to anyone, his name is registered with the authority. When he reaches eighteen years of age, poll-tax is collected from him, and, when he reaches eighty years of age, no poll-tax is collected from him. He is

then paid a certain amount of salary [pension] from the treasury. They say: 'We took from him when he was a youth, and we pay him a salary when he is old.'

(48) In every town there are scribes and teachers who impart education to the poor and their children; they receive their maintenance from the treasury.

(49) Their women keep their heads uncovered while the men cover their heads. There is a village [in China] named Tāyū situated on a mountain. Its inhabitants are short-statured, so the origin of every short-statured person in China is attributed to this place. The people of China are handsome and tall; they are pure white in colour tinged with redness. Among all the human beings, they have the blackest hair and their womenfolk let their hair float about.

(50) In India if a person makes a claim against another person in which capital punishment is necessary, the plaintiff is asked: 'Will you endure [the test of] fire?' When he says 'yes', then a piece of iron is heated to such an intensity that it becomes incandescent (lit. the fire appears in it). Then he is asked: 'Spread out your hand.' Then seven leaves of a tree found there are placed on his hand. Then the [hot] piece of iron is placed over the leaf. He then walks with it forwards and backwards until he drops it. Then a leather bag is fetched and his hand is put inside it. It is sealed with the royal seal. After three days, unpeeled rice is brought and he is asked to remove the husk from it. If this has no effect on his hand, he succeeds, and there is no death sentence against him, and the accused is compelled to pay a fine of one maund of gold which the Sulṭān appropriates for himself. Sometimes they boil water in an urn of iron or copper to such a degree that no one can even go near it. Then they cast an iron ring in it, and he [the plaintiff] is asked to put his hand inside it and to take the ring out. I have seen a person putting his hand in it and then taking it out unhurt [lit. healthy). In this case also, the plaintiff has to pay one maund of gold.

(51) In Ceylon, when a king dies, he is placed on a wheel-cart so low that it almost touches the ground; he is laid on the back on the lower side (*mu'akhkharihā*) in such a manner that the hair of his head drags the dust from the earth. A woman with a broom in her hand sweeps the dust over his head and continues to proclaim: 'Oh people, this was your king yesterday; he ruled over you and his orders werepromulgated amongst you. After leaving the world he has now turned into what you see him, and the Angel of Death has taken his life (lit. soul). So, do not be deceived with life after this.' [She continues to speak] in this manner for three days. Then, sandalwood, camphor and saffron are prepared [and applied over the corpse] and he is cremated. Then the ashes are flung into the air.[1] All Indians cremate their dead ones. Sarandīb is the last of the islands and is one of the lands of India. Sometimes when a king is cremated, his wife enters the fire and burns herself along with him, but if they do not wish, they do not do so.[2]

(52) There are some people in India who are dedicated to a life of wandering in the forests and the mountains. They seldom communicate with human beings, and sometimes eat the herbs and fruits of the forests. They wear iron rings through their penis, so that they may not be able to cohabit with women.[1] There are some others who are naked.[2] Then some of them set themselves up towards the sun and encounter it naked except that they put on something made of the leopard skin. I saw one of these men just as I described and then departed. After sixteen years, I returned once again and [to my surprise] I found him in the same state [as I had left him in]. I was surprised that his eyes did not melt away due to the heat of the sun.[3]

(53) In every kingdom, the members of the royal family belong to the same one family, and the authority does not go out of it. They have heir apparents; similarly, the calligraphists (*ahl al-kitābāt*) and the physicians belong to particular families, and these professions (*al-ṣanā'āt*) remain exclusively with them.

(54) The Indian kings do not submit to any single king; each one of them is an independent sovereign of his kingdom.

But Ballaharā is the paramount king (lit. king of kings) of India. In China they do not have heir apparents.

(55) The Chinese love music, but the Indians find blemish in musical instruments and do not make them.[1] They do not drink wine nor do they eat vinegar, for it is made out of wine. This (abstention) is not a faith with them, but they do so to protect their dignity. They say: 'Any king who drinks wine is not a king.' It is that they are surrounded by kings who wage war against them, so they say: 'How can an intoxicated person administer the affairs of his kingdom?'[2]

(56) Sometimes they fight each other over sovereignty, but this is rare: I have not seen anyone ousting another person from his kingdom except the people who are next to the land of pepper.[1] Whenever a king subjugates a kingdom, he entrusts the kingdom to a person belonging to the family of the defeated king, who remains under his authority. The people of the kingdom do not accept any other arrangement except this. In China, if a king who is under the suzerainty of the emperor rebels, they slaughter him and eat him up, for the flesh of anyone who is slaughtered by the sword is eaten up by the Chinese.[2]

(57) When the Indians and the Chinese wish to perform a marriage, they felicitate each other, then exchange presents, and then they make the marriage public by playing on cymbals and drums.[1] Their present consists of money, according to their means. If a man brings in a woman and if she acts wrongfully, then she and her seducer are both put to death throughout the land of India. If a man commits adultery with a woman with violence,[a] the man alone is killed, but if he commits adultery with a woman with her consent, then both of them are put to death.[2]

(58) Throughout the lands of India and China theft, whether small or big, is punished with death. In India, if a thief steals a cowry or more, a long piece of wood is taken

[a] The text has عتصبها which ought to be غتصبها (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 24).

and one of its edges is sharpened. He is then made to sit with his buttocks on it till it comes out from his throat.

(59) The Chinese practise sodomy with young boys who are placed for this purpose in the position of the prostitutes (lit. *al-zawānī*) of the idolators.

(60) The Chinese construct their walls with wood, while the Indians construct their buildings with stone, plaster, brick and mud.

(61) Neither the Chinese nor the Indians contract regular marriages.[a] The Chinese and Indian men marry as many wives as they wish.

(62) The food of the Indians consists of rice, and that of the Chinese wheat and rice. The Indians do not eat wheat.

(63) Neither the Indians nor the Chinese get circumcised.

(64) The Chinese worship the idols and pray to them and make humble entreaties to them. They have religious books.

(65) The Indians keep long beards. I have often seen a man with a beard as long as three cubits; they do not trim their moustache. Most of the Chinese have no beards which is natural to most of them. In India, when a person dies, they completely shave his head and beard.

(66) When the Indians imprison a person or put him in confinement, they do not allow him food or drink for seven days. They are in the habit of confining each other.

(67) The Chinese have judges who settle [the disputes] between them without the interference of the government. The Indians have the same practice.

(68) Tigers and wolves are found throughout China. As for the lion, it is not found in either of the two kingdoms [India and China].

(69) A highway robber is punishable by death.

(70) Both the Chinese and the Indians assert that the idols (*al-budada*) converse with them. In fact, it is their priests who talk to them.

[a] The text has باُصحاب فرش Sauvaget has translated: 'ne contractent point de mariages reguliers', which has been followed. See Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 24.

(71) Both the Chinese and the Indians kill the animals they wish to eat by striking at its skull until it dies; they do not slaughter it. Neither the Indians nor the Chinese take a bath after becoming impure (*janāba*).[a] The Chinese do not clean themselves[b] [after passing urine or stools] except with paper. The Indians take a bath every day before having their meals. The Indians do not cohabit with the woman during the period of menstruation; they make them leave their homes and keep away from them [from their impurity]. [On the other hand] the Chinese cohabit with them during the period of menstruation and do not make them leave [their homes]. The Indians clean their teeth[c] and no one takes food before cleaning them or before having a bath, but the Chinese do not follow this practice.

(72) India is much more spacious than China and is twice the size of the latter and the numbers of its kings are more [than those of China]. But China is more populated. Date palm[1] is neither found in China nor in India, but they have the rest of the trees and fruits which we do not have. In India there are no grapes, while in China it is found in small quantities, but other fruits are found in abundance. They have more pomegranates in India [than in China]. The Chinese have no science (*'ilm*).[d] Their religion originated in India;[2] they assert that it were the Indians who procured their idols for them, and that they are the people who possess religion. The inhabitants of both the countries believe in metempsychosis,[3] but they differ in the details (*furū'*, 'lit. consequences) of their religious practices. The Indians have medicine and philosophy. The Chinese also have medicine,[e] but their medical science is

[a] In Islam a bath is prescribed after every act resulting in impurity.

[b] The word used is *istanjā* which again means cleaning with water in the prescribed form.

[c] The word used is *istakā*, lit. 'to rub a thing with'; hence *miswāk*, a toothstick.

[d] Sauvaget has translated it as: 'Science the Loi', (p. 26). The author probably means religious science as is explained in the following sentence of the text.

[e] Sauvaget's translation 'l'art musical' was probably because of an oversight, or a printing mistake (Akhbār, p. 26).

mostly cauterization. They have knowledge of astronomy, but in India it is more popular. I do not know of any person in the two countries who is a Muslim and does not speak Arabic.[a] The Indians have few horses, but they are found in larger numbers in China. There are no elephants in China, and they do not leave them in their country [to breed], for they draw bad auguries from them.[4] The Indian kings possess large armies, but they do not maintain them. Whenever a king calls them to fight, they do so and maintain themselves with their own money; the king has no liability in this regard. But the Chinese pay [money] to them as the Arabs do.[5] China is more pleasant and beautiful [than India]. In most parts of India there are no towns, while the Chinese have large fortified cities everywhere. China is healthier, has few diseases and is most pleasant climatically; one cannot find a blind or a one-eyed person there nor anyone suffering from a disease, but these are found in large numbers in India. The rivers in both the countries are all of huge sizes: some of these are larger than our rivers. Rainfall throughout the two countries is heavy. In India there are many deserts while China is entirely populated. The Chinese are more handsome than the Indians and resemble the Arabs more in their dress and [similar] beasts of burden; in their costumes and their ceremonies they resemble the Arabs: they wear gowns [with full sleeves] and [tie] girdles. The Indians wear two pieces of waist-wrappers, and men and women both wear ornaments of gold and precious stones.

(73) On the other side of the land of China lies the land of al-Tughuzghuz who are Turks, and the Khāqān of Tibet. This [the latter] is adjacent to the lands of the Turks. As for [the regions adjacent to] the sea, there are the islands of al-Sīlā. Their inhabitants are white people and send gifts to the Ruler of China. They assert that, if they do not send gifts to him, the Heavens will not send rains to them. None of our companions have reached [these islands], so tales are narrated about them. They have white falcons.

[a] Sauvaget translates: 'Je ne connais personne de ces deux peuples qui soit musulman ou qui parle l'arabe' (*Akhbār*, p. 26).

II Commentary

(1) The sea referred to here is the Indian Ocean and the 'fish' described is the sperm whale. During the Middle Ages, the whales were found in large numbers in the Indian Ocean, and hence Arabic maritime literature of the period is full of adventurous tales about this mammal. As knowledge about the whale was meagre at the time, it is referred to as a 'fish' and not a mammal. Buzurg b. Shahriyār, the captain of *Rām-hurmuz*, relates that Abu'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Umar of Sīrāf told him that in A.H. 300/A.D. 912, he had seen at 'Umān a fish that the sea had washed up on the beach. The Emir Aḥmad b. Hilāl went along with his troops to the spot to see the monster. It was so huge that a horseman rode in from one side of its jaw and came out at the other. Its length was more than 200 ells (1 ell = 45 inch) and its height from top to bottom was fifty ells.

The whales were found in large numbers in the Sea of Zanj [along the coast of Abyssinia] and in the Sea of Harkand [Bay of Bengal]. They amused themselves by ramming ships. So when the sailors sighted the whales, they tried to frighten them away by shouting and beating two pieces of wood together. Each time they squirted water, the jet rose as high as lighthouse, and from a distance they looked like the sails of ships (*The Book of the Marvels of India*, pp. 12–13; cf. *Kitāb 'Ajā'ib al-Hind*, ed. Van der Lith, pp. 14–15; cf. Ibn Khurdādhbih, p. 61). Al-Idrīsī calls the whale *al-bāba* and says that the small-sized are hunted and then boiled, so that all the flesh melts and turns into liquid oil. They use the oil for stopping up the seams of boats after they are sewn together (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 35–36, 40, 129–30).

The whales were also found in the Sea of India and China. Sometimes they rammed against boats and broke them into pieces. The captains of boats shot them with arrows to frighten them away from their course. The smaller ones were hunted and oil extracted from them (cf. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, I, pp. 234–35). 'The herbs and shells growing on its back' may refer to the dorsal fin of the sperm whale, reduced to a low hump and continued as a ridge towards the tail.

(2) Cf. Buzurg b. Shahrīyar, *op. cit.*, p. 14, who gives similar information.

(1) [1]The whale is given different names by different authors: Al-Mas'ūdī calls it *al-'uwāl* in *Murūj*, I; pp. 234–35; *Akhbār al-Zamān* describes it as *al-balīqa* on p. 38 and as *al-'anbar* in p. 22; Al-Idrīsī speaks of it as *al-wālī* in p. 65 and *al-bāba* in p. 94 of *Nuzhat*, Rome/Naples. The sperm whale is *physeter catodon*, and the oil is the *liquid spermaceti* extracted from the brain of the sperm whale.

[2]Cf. Al-Mas'ūdī gives two variations: *al-lashk* and *al-sabl (op. cit.*, I. pp. 235, 402). Quatremère reads it as *sal*; Barbier de Meynard identified it with *remora (op. cit.*, I, p. 402). According to Sauvaget, it is the pilot fish [for it pilots the shark] and is called *djezavi* or *sīgān* in Arabic (*Akhbār*, p. 34, 2/3; cf. al-Idrīsī: *Al-lashank*, *Nuzhat*, p. 65).

(3) [1]According to Ibn Khurdādhbih (p. 61), its face resembles that of an owl. Sauvaget correctly points out that there is some confusion between the dog fish and the flying fish in the descriptions of these writers (*Akhbār*, p. 34, 3/1). The literal meaning of *mīj* in Persian is the locust (ibid., p. 34); Al-Idrīsī, *al-sabḥ* in *Nuzhat*, p. 65.

[2]This fish cannot be identified, but Sauvaget suggests the origin of the name from Greek *exokoitos* which means a fish that sleeps under water (*Akhbār*, pp. 34–35); cf. Al-Idrīsī' *al-'anqarīs* in *Nuzhat*, p. 65.

(4) [1]This is the Bay of Bengal (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 113). The name is derived from Skt. *Harikelīya* representing eastern Bengal, but, in the opinion of Filliozat, it may have some relation with the Tamil word *arikandam* which represents one of the nine divisions of the world by the Indians (*Akhbār*, p. 35, 4/2).

[2]*Lārvī* [Lata, for Gujarat] was the name given to the

eastern section of the Arabian Sea (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 113).

[3]This refers to the Laccadive and the Maldive Islands for which the general term used was *al-dībajāt* (from Skt. *dvipa* + *jat*, Persian plural); See Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 116.

[4]It is difficult to identifiy who this queen was in the eighth/ninth centuries, but Al-Idrīsī [first half of the twelfth century] gives some indication. He gives the name *Dmhra* which may be a methesis of *Dharma* (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 24; cf. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Mūrūj*, I, p. 335; Maqdisi, p. 13). Ibn Baṭṭūṭa gives the name Khadīja who was the ruler of these Islands (*Travels*, p. 243 *et seq.*).

[5]'*Anbar* is ambergris, a morbid concretion of the intestines of the sperm whale. The Arabs were not, however, sure of the origin of this substance. Some thought it grew as a plant at the bottom of the sea (Cf. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, I, pp. 335–36).

[6]This is *cypraea moneta* or money-cowry (Hindi: *kauṛī*.) According to Ibn Baṭṭuṭa, the rate of exchange in the Maldive Islands was 400,000 = 1 gold dinar, often falling to 1,200,000 to the dinar (*Travels*, p. 243).

(5) [1]Sarandīb is Ceylon.

[2]*Al-Ruhūn* (< Skt. *rōhana*, 'ascent') is Adam's Peak in Ceylon (see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 108; cf. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, I, p. 60 *et seq.*). Ibn Khurdādhbih (p. 64) states that, according to the Brahmans, the devotees of India, on this mountain the footmark of Adam is imprinted in the stone; it is seventy cubits long (cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 27). Tennent remarks that veneration of this mountain probably arose among the aborigines of Ceylon. Later, the hollow in the lofty rock was claimed by the Brahmans to be the footprint of Śiva; by the Buddhists that of Buddha; by the gnostics that of Ieu; by the Muslims that of Adam; while the Portuguese authorities were divided between the conflicting claims of St. Thomas and the eunuch of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia. (For further details, see Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 108–9.) Sinnappah Arasaratnam, commenting on François Valentijn's description of Adam's Peak, says that *sama nola* was the old name of the rock. It is

today called Sri Pāda (see *François Valentijn's Description of Ceylon*, tr. and ed. Sinnappah Arasaratnam, Hakluyt Society, London, 1978, p. 144; notes 4 and 5).

[3]In the beginning of the sixth century A.D., Ceylon was already divided between two kings (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 37, Note 6).

[4]*Al-shank* (< Skt. *Saṅkha*) is sea-shell.

(6) [1]Al-Rāmnī is Lāmūrī, the port in the neighbourhood of Acheh in Sumatra (see Tibbetts, *Arab Navigation*, etc., pp. 395, 472 and 493).

[2]Fanṣūr is the camphor port of Baroes on the west coast of Sumatra (Tibbetts, *op. cit.*, p. 490).

[3]Al-Niyān corresponds to Poulo-Niha. Head-hunting was not only practised in Borneo but also in the bordering islands of Sumatra (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 38, Note 6).

[4]Cannibalism was practised by the Bataks in the nineteenth century in Sumatra, but they only ate their enemies and certain criminals (see Akhbār, p. 38, Note 8).

[5]*Salāḥṭ* stands for *selat, salat* which means a strait, and here it refers to the Strait of Malacca (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 38, Note 9).

(7) Lanjabālūs stands for the Nicobar Islands. Sauvaget is mistaken in identifying it with *Lang-p'o-lou-sseu*, 'designe chez les Chinois la partie occidentale de l'ile de Sumatra' (*Akhbār*, p. 38, 7/1; cf. Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 117–18).

(8) These are the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal. The two islands would be the Great Andaman and the Little Andaman, and the sea between them would be present Duncan Strait (see for details, Tibbetts, *op. cit.*, pp. 473–75). The etymology of the name *Andāmān* is uncertain, but Yule suggests its origin from Ptolemy's *Agathon daimones* ('the Island of good fortune'); the Chinese form of the name is *Ngan-tou-man* (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 39, Note 8/1).

(9) *Al-Khushnāmī* is Persian word meaning 'having a good name'. The rock on which the sailors found sliver is not identified.

(10) [1]The phonomenon of rain water containing garbage

of the sea must refer to the typhoon.

[2]The phenomenon of high waves which appeared to be burning may have been due to the reflection of the setting sun on the high waves.

[3]Al-lukham is the shark (see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 40, 10/4).

(11) *Khānfū* is Canton.

(12) In Canton, during the period under description, the foreign merchants lived in a separate quarter of the city called in Chinese *fan-fang*; it was governed by the chief of the foreigners called *fan-tchang*, nominated by the Chinese Government (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 41, 12/1). Similar practice was observed in India at Chaul, Bombay (Maharashtra), which in the beginning of the tenth century was inhabited by about 10,000 Muslims called *baysarah*. They had their own officials to settle the affairs of the community (S. Maqbul Ahmad, 'Travels of Abu'l Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mas'ūdī, in *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, October 1954, p. 511).

(13) [1]Sīrāf was an important port in the Middle Ages situated on the east of the Gulf. Its ruins are placed at Bender-Tahiri, Lat. 27° 38′ N. It was destroyed in an earthquake in A.D. 977 (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 41, 13/1; cf. S. Maqbul Ahmad, *Indo-Arab Relations*, pp. 82–83).

[2]The Banū al-Ṣaffāq, who belonged to the tribe of Azd, constituted an important group of people who lived along the Iranian coast of the Gulf towards the end of the ninth century (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 41, 13/4).

[3]This is the Qishm Island (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 42, 13/5).

[4]The *durdur* (whirlpool or turbulent water) is placed at a distance of 150 *farsakh* from Bahrain by Ibn Khurdādhbih (p. 60). Al-Mas'ūdī also mentions it as *Durdur Musandam* called Abū Ḥimyar by the sailors (*Murūj*, I, 240–1). The European navigators called it 'le Coins'. These are the three rocks situated near each other, near Cape Musandam (see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 42, 13/6).

(14) [1]Kulam Malay stands for Quilon port in Kerala (India).

[2]The white-skinned population of Lanjabālūs Island (Nicobars) is also described by other writers (I. Khur., p. 65; *Marvazī*, tr. 59). According to Yule (II, pp. 307 *et seq.*), the main part of the population is believed to be of a race akin to the Malay.

[3]The wine referred to here is *tāṛī* (in Hindi) made of the fruit of the palm-tree; in English it is called *toddy*.

(15) [1]Kalāhbār (Kalāh + vāṛ) represents the ancient kingdom of Kedah and the north-western coast of the Malay Peninsula. In the medieval times, Kedah was the port of call. G.A. Hodgson, in his article 'An Introduction to Kedah History', points out that 'Kedah has the distinction of being the oldest State in Malaysia. . . .' The present boundaries of the state are comparatively recent, and, therefore, Penang, Perlis and Province Wellestey are, for much of the historical period, part of Kedah. Kedah is known as Kedah Darulaman, 'Kedah the Abode of Peace', or, as it has been so well described, as the 'Most Ancient Kedah' (*Buku Kenangan*, Souvenir Volume, Kuala Lumpur, 20 January 1971). The fort at the mouth of the Kedah River defended not only the state capital at Kota Star but also the Kingdom of Kedah and the overland route to the Gulf of Siam. Further, the mouth of Kedah River had from early times been an important centre for trade (ibid., 'Kota Kuala Kedah'). The port of Kedah was used both for portage purposes and as a point of rendezvous in connection with the passage through the Malacca Straits. It was most easily approached from the west via the passage between Sumatra and the Nicobar Islands during the summer monsoon. The original port of Kedah was located up the then broad estuary of the Kuala Merbok, now swamp-filled, entering the sea at some distance above Penang Island. Kedah was widely used by Indian traders from the early centuries of the Christian era and probably from the eighth century by Muslim Arabs and Persians. The port continued to be used by both Arabs and Chinese up to the fourteenth century (John F. Cady, *Southeast Asia*, p. 30 and Note 18). Keda كيدا at 1° P.S. and قدح (Ibn Mājid) is the Malay State of Kedah (Tibbetts, *Arab Navigation*, p. 483). I visited Kuala Kedah on 26 August

1978, while I was staying with my daughter, Dr. Zohra Banu, in Kuala Lumpur.

[2] Al-zābaj represents Java (see Book I, 16/3 above).

[3] *Al-fuwat* is the plural of *fūṭah*, which is called *sarong* in Malay.

[4] This is Tiyouman, a small island near the eastern coast of the Malay Peninsula (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 44, 15/5).

[5] Not identified.

(16) [1] Ṣanf is the Arabic form of Champa (South Annam) well known for aloes-wood in the Middle Ages (see Minorsky, *Ḥudūd*, p. 240; cf. Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, pp. 44–45, 16/1).

[2] Sauvaget did not agree with the earlier identification of Ṣanf Fulāu with Poulo-Condore. He identified it with the island Tchan-pou-lao of the Chinese itineraries, situated in front of an estuary, Sonnom, in Annam, and which they passed by while going to Canton. (For full philological discussion, see *Akhbār*, p. 45, 16/4.)

[3] G. Ferrand identified the name with *Tchang-khai*, literally 'the immense sea' in Chinese, corresponding to the sea between Hainan Island and the Channels (see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 46, 16/5).

(17) [1] On Abarkāwān, see Book II, 13/3 above.

[2] On tides in the Indian Ocean, see Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, I, 244 *et seq.*; Al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat*, pp. 92–93.

(18) Maljan is not identified precisely, but it may have been one of the Andaman Islands or the Mergui Islands (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 46, 18/1). According to *Ḥudūd al-'Alam* (p. 163), M.ljān (M.ljman?) is 'a town of the Zang on the sea coast. It is the haunt of the merchants visiting those parts.' Idrīsī places near al-Rāmī [Sumatra] the Island of Jālūs and gives the same description of its inhabitants as of the inhabitants of Maljan (*Nuzhat*, p. 78). The distance from al-Rāmī to Jālūs was two days' journey [by sea].

(19) [1] This is a small fish not more than 10 cm long found in the Sea of China (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 47, 19/1).

[2] This is coconut crab (in French *birgus*). The term *samak* [fish] used for it is inappropriate (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*; p. 47, 19/2).

[3] This is the ordinary crab found in the South Sea which, when it grows old, transforms itself into stone (Fou Kong quoted by Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 47, 19/3).

(20) Al-Idrīsī places this island close to al-Anjiya Island, one of the islands of al-Ranaj (al-Zabaj = Java) of which the inhabitants were called al-Anqūja. He describes this island as small with a lofty mountain which no one can ascend or go near due to its burning heat (Al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat*, Rome/Naples, pp. 61–62). The exact location of this volcanic island is not fixed.

(22) *Kūshān* is a kind of stew.

(23) [1] The use of paper for everyday cleaning suggests the existence of paper in large quantities in China during this early period.

[2] The reporter has found resemblance between the religion of the Zoroastrians and that of the Chinese, perhaps because like the concept of dualism in the former, in Chinese philosophy there is the concept of the *yin* and the *yang*, a fundamental belief in the concept of the universe (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 50, 23/4). But that they ate dead (animals) and things resembling them is hardly true.

(24) The theory of four kings of the world seems to have originated in India (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 50, 24/1), but the reporter has altered the position by assigning the first place to 'the King of the Arabs'. According to Abū Zayd al-Ḥasan al-Sīrāfī, the King of China, in an audience given to Ibn Wahb of Baṣra, reckoned the kings of the world as five: first was the King of 'Irāq who held the title of 'king of kings'; then the King of China; then the King of the Savages, *i.e.* the Turks; then the King of India; then the King of Rūm [Byzantium] (*Silsilat al-tawārīkh*, Vol. II, p. 78). The Chinese King who gave audience to Ibn Wahb in China in 872 was Emperor I Tsung (C.P. Fitzgerald, *China: A Short Cultural History*, London, 1961, p. 339; cf. my article 'Travels of... al-Mas'ūdī'

in *Isl. Cult*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, p. 523). The observation made by the author of *An Outline History of China* (p. 111) is worth noting. He says: 'Tang was at the time the most powerful, and the most economically and culturally developed empire in the world'. This pertains to first half of the seventh century A.D.

(25) [1]Ballaharā refers to the Rāshṭrakūta kings of the Deccan. (For full discussion see Book I, I/1.)

[2]Kumkam is Konkan in Maharashtra.

(26) [1]Al-Jurz refers to the Gujara-deśa. (For full discussion, see Book I, I/4.)

[2]'A tongue of the land' refers to Kathiawar in Gujarat.

[3]The silver ingots were introduced in Gujarat towards the end of the Middle Ages and carried the name of Lār, i.e., Gujarat (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 52, 26/4).

[4]This information could not be ascertained.

(27) Al-Ṭāqa is identified with Ṭakka-dėsa. (For full discussion, see Book I, I/3.)

(28) [1]Dharma refers to the Pala rulers of Bengal. (For full discussion, see Book I, I/6.)

[2]This is the famous muslin of Dhākā.

[3]*al-ṣamar* is Sanskrit *camara* ('fly-chaser'). It was made of different materials.

[4]*al-bishān* is from Skt. *viṣāṇa*, a horn.

[5]*al-karkaddan* is the Arabicized form of Sanskrit *khaḍgadanta* (sabre-toothed). This is the rhinoceros.

(29) This is Lakhimpur in eastern Assam.

(30) Tanluwing (Tanluin) is the old form of Telaing, a name given by the Burmese to the Mons and is derived from Telinga, a term applied to east and south India (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 54, 30/1). The Mons were Austroasiatic who had migrated southward from the upper reaches of the Mekong and Salween River and were well established at the dawn of history in the delta coastal region of Lower Burma and along the Tenasserim coast (Cady, *Southeast Asia*, pp. 4 *et seq.*).

(31) V. Minorsky has identified al-Müja, Mūsa (or Mūsha) with 'the still existing Mo-so people of the north-western

part of Yun-nan'. The early history of the Mo-so is little known. They came from outside and founded a kingdom in the prefecture of Li-kiang-fu (to the north of Ta-li-fu in the loop of the Yangtze). In Mongol times the Mo-so were called Chaghān-jāng, *i.e.* the White Jang, to distinguish them from the Qara Jāng. The Chinese call the Mo-so *Pe-man* ('White barbarians'), and transcribe their indigenous name Mo-sié or Mosha (Minorsky, *Marvazī*, pp. 149–50).

(32) The identification of al-Mādbud is problematic. In the first place, various authors give different readings (Mānk in *Marvazī*, p. 49; Mānak in *Ḥudūd*, p. 87; al-Mādbud in *Akhbār*). Other variants are Māyd, Mānd, etc. Starting from the form Mānk given both by *Ḥudūd* and *Marvazī*, Minorsky restores it to Mang and identifies it with the well-known 'Gold teeth' of Marce Pelo; in Chinese *Kin-chih*, in Persian *Zardandān*. The Gold teeth were originally called *Mang-shi-man*, 'the barbarians of *Mang-shih*', as the Chinese called a region in the western corner of Yun-nan on the right bank of the Salween, some 100 km to the southwest of Yung-ch'ang. (For further identifications, see Minorsky, *Marvazī*, p. 150.) In Sauvaget's opinion, the word *mādbud* or *mātbud* is a transcription of the Tibetan *smad bod*, 'le Bod inferieur', a term applied to eastern Tibet as against 'le Bod superieur', *stod bod* applied to the central and western Tibet (for further discussion, see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, pp. 55, 32).

(33) [1]Jādum is Chinese *yāu-d'ung*, pronounced ,today as *háo-thóng*. It is a long trumpet used by Tibetan lamas. *al-ṣīniyyāt* is used in the sense of 'Chinese vessel, porcelain'. The drug in question is the lac (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 56, 33/3).

[2]It was a custom in China to play the drum of the palace at different times of the day and night. In the morning it was beaten 400 times to open the gate of the city. Before sunset, it was beaten again 400 times to shut the city gate. After its closure, it was beaten again 600 times to close the gates of the quarter close to the city wall. The drum was beaten so loudly as to be audible to the whole town (Chou Yi-liang, quoted by Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 56 33/5). According to another

Chinese text, the drum was played 200 times at 9 a.m. to announce the opening of the market and 300 times at sunset to announce its closing.

[3]During the T'ang period the Chinese used the clepsydra (water clock) placed in the Palace, and six officers with assistants were posted to run it and to look after it (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 56, 33/6).

(34) [1]*Fals*, in the monetary sense, represents a 'small copper coin', and in the common parlance *fulūs* means money in general. Here it is used in a special sense. After A.D. 621 the T'ang rulers had struck a new copper coin the China whose use spread in the Far East and Central Asia. A string of 100 pieces represented an ounce of silver. In terms of Islamic money, 1,000 pieces were equal to one *mithqāl* or one *dinār* of 4.25 gr. of fine gold (see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 56, 34/1, quoting other authorities). During the Northern Sung peirod, every year the government had millions of strings of coin minted which fell short of the demand of the market. Silver began to enter into circulation, and in the middle of the Northern Sung period, bank notes, then called *Chai-tse*, were introduced (*A.O.H.C.*, pp. 140–44).

[2]*Al-dhabl* is the back of the sea-turtle (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 131).

[3]The *qadah*, a drinking bowl-shaped cup, was used in many countries of the East until modern times when it was replaced by the modern glass or tumbler. Occasionally, however, one comes across the traditional old people using it for drinking water; sometimes it is made of silver. *Al-ghaḍār* must be *kaolin* (Chinese *kao-ling*, name of mountain), fine white clay produced by decomposition of feldspar, used in making porcelain. The latter is a fine kind of earthenware with translucent body and transparent glaze. Porcelain was an important Chinese invention which; during the early T'ang period, became a popular article. An extremely fine specimen could emulate jade in purity, hence the name 'imitation jade' (*A.O.H.C.*, p. 107; see illustration of porcelain wine-jar, ibid., opposite page 138). According to *Marvazī*, the Chinese used

a vehicle which could be made to move and stop with men sitting on it (*Marvazī*, pp. 15–16). This was probably the first mechanical vehicle invented by them.

[4]The origin of the term *fakkūj* cannot be traced.

(35) Abū Zayd al-Ḥasan al-Sīrāfī, who edited *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa'l-Hind*, says that he found practically everything mentioned in the book correct and true except the statement that when the food was placed near the dead body at night it was not found there the next morning, which made them [Chinese] claim that the deceased ate the food. He verified this from a trustworthy person who had come from there [China], and the latter denied it by saying that it had no basis just as there was no basis for the statement of the dualists that the [idols] talked to them. He adds that after this date the [political] affairs of China especially had changed, and certain events that took place there affected sailing to that country (*Relation des voyages*, pp. 60–62). Abū Zayd was probably referring to the Peasant Revolt of A.D. 874 led by Wang Hsien-chih and Huang-chao and the end of the T'ang dynasty in A.D. 907, when 'affairs of China especially had changed and certain events that took place which affected the sailing of Arab boats there' (see 47 below).

(37) [1]*Ts'eu-che* was the title of the prefect; during the T'ang period it was pronounced *ts'ie-si*. The officer, an envoy of the emperor, was assigned the job of inquiring into everything that was against the law (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 58, 37/1).

[2]*T'aï-fou*, under the T'ang, was the title given to one of the three important teachers of the emperor. Here it is applied to the imperial commissioner who resided at Canton with 15,400 soldiers under his command (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 58, 37/2).

[3]See Sauvaget for etymology of the word *ṭūqām* (*Akhbār*, p. 59, 37/3).

[4]The title *lou-che-ts 'an-kiun-che* was applied to the 'administrator-registrar' who was subordinate to a governor-general. Sauvaget is not sure if the application of this title to the chief justice was justified (*Akhbār*, p. 59, 37/5).

(38) [1]This probably refers to the appointment to a governor's post or to any charge given to an officer. He was not appointed until he was forty (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 59, 38/1).

[2]This is the title of the superior [chief] secretary who directed each of the offices of the ministers of the capital (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 59, 38/4).

(40) On taxes, see 47 below. One of the reforms of Wang An-shih (beginning from A.D. 1069) was to control prices. 'To prevent the big merchants from monopolizing the market and increase state revenue, the government purchased goods at a fair price when there was a glut in the market and resold them when the supply dwindled' (*A.O.H.C.*, pp. 142–43).

(41) The observation made about tea-drinking pertains to the period between A.D. 830 and A.D. 856. The Chinese word *tch'a* was pronounced as *ğa during the T'ang period. Known at least since the end of the third century, tea was at first used only in the southern provinces of China. (For further details, see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 60, 41/2.) This is the earliest reference to tea in Arabic literature. The words for tea in different languages seem to be derived from the Chinese *tch'a*; French *thé*; English *tea*; Russian *chāy*; Hindi-Urdu-Persian *chāy*, *chā*, etc.

(42) *Darā* is a Persian word.

(43) Marvazī gives similar information. He says:

> One of their customs is that, when someone is leaving the country for a journey, they register his name and the goods and slaves he is taking with him. At every military post where he arrives the document is read and the officer in command reports to the eunuch, who is the king's clerk, that so-and-so, son of so-and-so, safely passed here on such a day and such a month, with his goods and slaves. They do it to protect people's property. He who left their country without the king's permission and was caught is arrested, imprisoned and fined (Minorsky, *Marvazī*, p. 27).

(44) On the practice of drawing a debt deed in T'ang period, see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 61.

(45) *Baghbūr* is an Iranian word, which means 'Son of the Heaven'. It is the translation of the official title of the Emperor

of China, *t'ien-tseu* (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 61, 45/3). Why the Arabs called him *al-Maghbūr* (covered with dust) is not clear, but it seems to have been used in a derogatory sense. In *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam* the term used is 'Faghfūr-i Chīn who is said to be a descendant of Farīdhūn (*Ḥudūd*, p. 84). Minorsky remarks that the statement that the Emperor of China was descended from Farīdhūn is certainly explainable by the tradition, according to which Farīdhūn's son Tūr became the master of the Turks and Chin and was accordingly called Tūrān-Shāh or Shāh-i Chīn. Ḥudūd's more direct source may be Ibn Khurdādhbih (p. 16) who says that (**baghbūr* is a descendant of Afrīdhūn), Minorsky. *Ḥ.'A.*, p. 227).

(46) This stone could not be identified.

(47) Marvazī's data on poll-tax [in Chinese *ting-K'ou-shui*), old-age pensions, etc. follow Sulaymān (Minorsky, *Marvazī*, p. 83). Even prostitutes were taxed by the government (see *Marvazī*, tr. pp. 23–25). The information on the tax system as given in *Akhbār* does not seem to corroborate with the facts obtaining in China during this period and in the light of contemporary Chinese history. Although land-tax (*Kharāj*), such as the Arabs understood, was not levied on the peasants, but taxes were received in kind. The government introduced 'land equalization' system and the *tsu yung tiao* system during the early T'ang period. Land laid waste during the earlier civil disturbance was distributed among the peasants to cultivate. Under the *tsu yung tiao* system, an adult was required to pay *tsu* in the form of two piculs (1 picul = 133 1/3 lb.) of grain annually, *tiao* in the form of twenty feet of silk, and twenty days' labour service. Those unwilling to do service could pay three feet of silk for every day missed, a practice called *yung*. Remission or exemption was granted in time of natural calamities. Rents and taxes were collected according to the prescribed rate. Thus, agricultural production was revived, output of grain and textiles grew, and the state was exceedingly prosperous (*A.O.H.C.*, pp. 105–06).

After the An-shih Rebellion which ended in A.D. 763, the

land equalization system was broken up. Many of the local authorities did not pay rents and taxes, and the landlords were immune from tax payment and labour service. The bankrupt peasants who became landlords' tenants also paid no taxes to the central government. To defray the immense military outlay, the T'ang government had to introduce hundreds of miscellaneous taxes, the burden of which was borne by the poor peasants. But the government could not extract from the peasants all the money it needed. So, to get out of the impasse they introduced the *two-tax* law in A.D. 780. It provided:

(*i*) The central government would fix the total amount of taxes according to expenditure and assign to each locality a certain portion to be collected from the taxpayers;

(*ii*) The taxpayers would pay a sum proportionate to the size of their property; and

(*iii*) Taxes were to be levied twice annually.

Thus, the burden of the peasant was slightly lightened. But the powerful landlords avoided paying their due amounts and transferred the burden on to the peasants. The peasants, therefore, lost their lands, and the landlords who led wasteful lives in the towns sold their estates (ibid., pp. 120–21). The annexation of land after the two-tax system, corruption of the officials, accumulation of land by the eunuchs in the suburbs of the capital, drought, whipping of the peasants who failed to pay taxes—all these factors paved the way for the outbreak of peasant revolt of A.D. 874 under the leadership of Wang Hsien-chih and Huang Chao. Finally, although the rebellion failed, it acted as a disintegrating factor of the T'ang dynasty which continued to weaken until it was overthrown by Chu Wen in A.D. 907 (ibid., pp. 122–25).

From the above brief survey of the tax patterns, it is evident that the peasants were not immune from the taxes which they paid either in the form of grain, silk, or labour service. Then, the tax that was collected per head according to 'their wealth and land', as mentioned in the text, should refer to the two-tax law introduced in A.D. 780. *Akhbār al-Ṣīn* was

completed in A.D. 850, and the particular information on poll-tax must have been drawn up before A.D. 850, but we are not sure who was the source of the information or when he prepared it. In any case, it must have been drawn up when the two-tax system was still in practice. Abū Zayd al-Ḥasan's reference to changes in China may refer to the fall of the T'ang dynasty in A.D. 907 and the establishment of the Sung dynasty.

(49) Tā-yū is identified with 'hien de Taï-hou' in the prefecture of Nanking (Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 62, 49/2).

(50) Al-Bīrūnī observes that, in case a claim was made, the judge first demanded from the plaintiff documentary evidence, failing which the contest was settled by means of witnesses who might not be less than four but could be more. If the plaintiff was unable to prove his claim, the defendant must swear to his innocence or ask the plaintiff to take the oath: 'Swear thou that thy claim is true and I will give thee what thou claimest.' Among the various types of oaths taken before five learned Brahmans, Al-Bīrūni mentions the following as the highest kind of ordeal: they make a piece of iron so hot that it is nearly melting, and put it with a pair of tongs on the hand of the defendant, there being nothing between his hand and the iron save a broad leaf of some plant, and under it some few and scattered corns of rice in the husks. They order him to carry it seven paces, and then he may throw it to the ground. (*A.I.*, ii, pp. 158–60; cf. Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 60, 50/2; *Indo-Arab Relations*, pp. 123–25).

(51) [1]Cf. Al-Mas'ūdī who gives a similar text but adds: 'I have seen in Ceylon' (*Murūj*, I, pp. 167–68). Similar text is given by Al-Idrīsī, (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 61). François Valentijn describes the funeral rites of the Ceylonese thus:

> If they happen to die, against expectation, they are cremated, if of a high rank, but the lower classes are buried in the woods. For this they employ the necessary servants who wrap the body in a mat and carry it there. They mourn for their dead, the women with hair hanging loose make a dreadful braying, holding their hands like disconsolates above their heads, reciting at the same time the praise of the deceased even though he may have been a great rascal. They

do this for 3 to 4 days together, morning and evening, while the men stand by and sigh. However, it must be said that the women do this more out of custom and for the sake of propriety than from grief....'

Those of the highest rank are laid in a hewn-out tree after their entrails are removed, and the body is embalmed and strewn with pepper and it must remain there outside the house till the Emperor gives orders to cremate it, and this happens then generally under a sort of arch of honour which is covered with coconuts and other fruits with many beautiful leaves, though it takes place for lesser lords with less eulogy and with less honour. But if anyone dies from chicken-pox, even though he is a noble, he is buried on thorns without any honour (*François Valentijn's Description of Ceylon*, p. 171).

Lady Hosie, describing Balinese cremation, says that several bodies are cremated at a time; the bodies are dried and mummified and kept till the auspicious day. A tower is built in which the bodies are kept, and one by one the bodies are brought down to a bier near which a priest stands. 'A procession of women weeping yet smiling, have let their hair down and swept the bier with it, and now line up to bring title offerings' (*The Story of Exploration and Adventure*, Vol. II, pp. 446–47).

[2] This refers to the practice of *satī*, a woman burning herself with the body of her deceased husband by throwing herself into the flames.

(52) The information on the various religious sects of India and their practices is found in bits and pieces in many of the early Arabic and Persian works, but 'none of them has preserved the traces of the original in such a colourful way as Gardīzī' (Minorsky, *Gardīzī on India*, p. 626). Gardīzī's source of information on Indian religions was Abū 'Abd Allāh [Muḥammad b. Aḥmad] Jayhānī, who in all probability used the fuller text [not extant] of Ibn Khurdādhbih's *Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik*. Minorsky, after a comparative study of the various available texts on the sects of India, came to the conclusion: '... at the bottom of the greater part of the

earlier information on India must be the report or an agent whom the Barmakid Yaḥyā b. Khālid sent to India (A.D. 800) to collect medicinal plants and to draw up a report on Indian religions' (*Gardīzī*, p. 626; cf. *Marvazī*, pp. 125–26). As *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa'l-Hind* was compiled in A.D. 851 and the first draft of Ibn Khurdādhbih's work was completed in A.H. 232/A.D. 846, it is not unlikely that the latter was the source of the *Akhbār*. It is also possible that the information contained in this paragraph was borrowed directly from the original report.

[1] This sect may be identified with the followers of Śiva called by Gardīzī 'Kālī' who went about in the likeness of *Shib* (Śiva) suspending to their phallus a large bell such as prevented them from any intercourse with women (*Gardīzī*, p. 632; cf. *Marvazī*: *The Kābāliya* (*Kāpālika*), p. 42.

[2] Although the *Akhbār*, by stating that there are some others who are naked, gives the impression that this sect is different from that of the followers of Śiva, the description found both in Gardīzī and Marvazī pertains to them. Gardīzī says that their livelihood consisted of alms and 'they are stark naked' (p. 632; cf. *Marvazī*, p. 42).

[3] According to Al-Idrīsī the Brahmans also put on leopard skins or skins of other animals and give sermons (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, pp. 37, 147). The story of a man gazing at the sun and being in the same position even after sixteen years is incredible. The reporter might have seen someone worshipping the sun and another person in the same position after sixteen years.

(55) [1] Indians finding blemish in musical instruments and not making them is rather a strange information, and is contradictory to the ancient tradition of India of making musical instruments. Chinese music during the Sui-T'ang period attained a high level; orchestras were on a grand scale and a wide variety of musical instruments were used. 'Sui-T'ang music was a typical example of the fusion of the culture of Asian nations.' The dances were drawn widely from the Western Regions, Central Asia and India (*An Outline History of China*, pp. 134–35).

[2]About Manu on drinking wine, see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 63, 55/2. Al-Bīrūnī states that among the things forbidden by law was wine, but it was allowed to the Śūdra. 'He may drink it, but dare not sell it, as he is not allowed to sell meat'. But these laws applied particularly to the Brahmans, for they were the guardians of the religion and because it forbade them to give way to their lusts (*A.I.*, II, pp. 151–52).

(56) [1]The land of pepper refers to the coastal region of Kerala, *i.e.* Malabar.

[2]On this practice of the Chinese, see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 64, 56/2.

(57) [1]This practice is true even today. When the bridegroom goes to the house of the bride for the marriage ceremony, he goes in a procession which is called the *bārāt*, and music is played and people dance all along the route.

[2]According to Al-Bīrūnī, an adultress was driven out of the house of the husband and banished (*A.I.*, II, p. 162; cf. *Indo-Arab Relations*, pp. 125–26).

(58) Al-Bīrūnī says that the law of theft directed that the punishment of the thief should be in accordance with the value of the stolen object. So, sometimes a punishment of extreme or middling severity is necessary, sometimes a course of correction and imposing a payment, sometimes only exposing to public shame and ridicule. If the object is very great, the kings blind a Brahman and mutilate him by cutting off his left and right foot, or the right hand and left foot, whilst they mutilate a Kṣatriya without blinding him, and kill thieves of the other castes (*A.I.*, II, p. 162). According to Al-Maqdisī, the thief, robber and one who commits rape on the minors are punished with fire, but sometimes, however, they use the pole which consists of sharpening the edge of rod and introducing it to the bottom of the accused (*Le Livre de la Creation et de l' Histoire*, iv, 10; cf. *Indo-Arab Relations*, p. 125; Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 64, 58/2). The punishment by the rod is probably the same as *sūlī par charāhnā* (to put someone on the *sūlī*).

(61) The Arabs had peculiar notions and ideas about

marriage laws and practice in India. Since these did not conform to the laws in Islam pertaining to marriage and conjugal relations, they believed that the Indians could have as many wives as they liked. Al-Bīrūnī, who presents a more accurate picture, says that a man, according to some Hindus, may marry one to four wives depending upon the caste to which he belongs. But 'he is not allowed to take more than four; but if one of his wives dies, he may take another one to complete the legitimate number. However, he must not go beyond it' (*A.I.*, II. pp. 155–56). In fact, marriage among the Hindus is a sacrament, a religious bondage, and hence, until recent times, there was no divorce in Hindu law. 'Husband and wife can only be separated by death, as they have no divorce', says Al-Bīrūnī. 'If a wife loses her husband by death, she cannot marry another man. She had only to choose between two things—either to remain a widow as long as she lives or to burn herself; and the latter eventuality is considered the preferable, because as a widow she is ill-treated as long as she lives' (ibid., p. 154–55).

The whole confusion in the minds of the reporters seems to have arisen, because marriage is not a contract in Hindu law as it is in Islam. Further, the Hindus are very much particular about marriage relationship. Al-Bīrūnī says:

> It is absolutely forbidden to marry related women both of the direct *descending* line, *viz.* a granddaughter or great-granddaughter, and of the direct *ascending* line, *viz.* a mother, grandmother, or great-grandmother. It is also forbidden to marry collateral relations, *viz.* a sister, a niece, a maternal or paternal aunt and their daughters, except in case the couple of relations who want to marry each other be removed from each other by five consecutive generations. In that case the prohibition is waived, but, notwithstanding, such a marriage is an object of dislike to them (*A.I.*, II, p. 155).

(62) Here it probably refers to the eating habit of the South Indians who generally eat rice. The reporter perhaps was unaware of the North Indian habit of taking wheat as well as rice.

(63) The reporter has particularly mentioned circumcision,

for it is incumbent upon the Muslims.

(64) This may refer to the practice of paying homage to the statues of Buddha in China.

(65) The length of the beard, three cubits, is a slight exaggeration. Trimming of the moustache is a religious obligation for the Muslims just as keeping beard is.

(66) It is not clear which custom of confinement the reporter is referring to here.

(67) Al-Idrīsī says: 'Administration of justice (*'adl*) among the people of India is in the very nature of the people. They do not rely on anything except it. They are noteworthy for the excellence of their justice, for keeping their contracts, and for the beauty of their character' (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 60). Practically, all the Arab writers of the Middle Ages are unanimous in their praise of the sense of justice that the Indians possessed and the excellent system of their administration of justice. See *Indo-Arab Relations*, pp. 123–25; cf. Manu, 138: 'Lorsque le roi ne fait pas lui même l'examen des causes, qu'il charge un brahmane instruit de remplir cette fonction' (quoted from *Akhbār*, p. 66, 1).

(68) The information about the non-existence of lions in India is wrong even for today, for they are confined to the Gir Forest in Gujarat.

(69) See Book II, 58 above.

(70) This particular information was contradicted by Abū Zayd al-Hasan al-Sīrafī. See above.

(71) In another place, Sulaymān says about the Chinese that they eat dead [animals] (*Akhbār*, pp. 11, 23) (Cf. Ibn al-Faqih p. 14, 'The Indians kill what they want to eat and do not slaughter it. They strike at its skull until it dies. According to Idrīsī, the Indians do not slaughter a bird or an animal whether big or small. As for cows, they are forbidden to eat them absolutely (Maqbul, *Idrīsī*, p. 61). Al-Bīrūnī thus states the laws which applied only to the Brahmans:

As matters stand thus it is allowed to kill animals by means of strangulation, but only certain animals, others being excluded. The meat of such animals, the killing of which is allowed, is forbidden in case they die a sudden death, Animals the killing of which is allowed are sheep, goats, gazelles, hares, rhinoceroses (*gandha*), the buffaloes, fish, water and land birds, as sparrows, ring-doves, francolins, doves, peacocks, and such other animals which are not loathsome to man nor noxious. That which is forbidden are cows, horses, mules, asses, camels, elephants, tame poultry, crows, parrots, nightingales, all kinds of eggs and wine.

He says that originally killing in general was forbidden to the Indians, but people, however, have the desire for meat and will always fling aside every order to the contrary. Therefore, the here-mentioned law applies in particular to the Brahmans, for they are the guardians of the religion, and because it forbids them to give way to their lusts (*A.I.*, II, pp. 151–52).

(72) [1]The information about date-palm is strange, for it is found in India. But the variety is poor.

[2]This refers to Buddhism; it is a well-known fact that it was adopted from India. Hsuan-tsang, who spent more than ten years studying the Buddhist classics in India, returned to Changan with 600-odd Buddhist books and spent more than twenty years translating them. Altogether he translated more than 1,300 volumes which have since become invaluable assets to researchers on Buddhism and Indian culture, since many of the original copies in India were lost. He also wrote an account of his trip, entitled *Records of Western Travels* (See *An Outline History of China*, pp. 112–13).

[3]The belief in metempsychosis is true about India, but it is incorrect to say that the Chinese also believed in it.

[4](4) This statement is not correct, for the Chinese texts of the T'ang period speak of the existence of elephants there (see Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 67, 72/8).

[5]See Sauvaget, *Akhbār*, p. 67, 72/9.

(73) Marvazī has a similar text:

At the farthest end of the Chinese territory lies the land called (Sīlā, Shin-lo, Corea). Whoever Muslim or other stranger enters it, settles in it and never leaves it, on account of its pleasantness and excellence. Much gold is found there.

The territories of China lie between the Ocean, the Toghuzghuz territories, Tibet and the Persian Gulf.

Tibet is a country situated between China, India, the country of the Kharlukh and Toghuzghuz and the sea of Fārs. Some of it lies in the kingdom of China and some in the kingdom of India. The inhabitants resemble those of China, Turkish [lands] and India. Tibet has an independent king and its language differs from other languages. A particular feature of their country is that whoever enters it and settles in it becomes ever gay and smiling without knowing the reason for it, and never a sad [face] is seen in it (*Marvazī*, tr. pp. 27–28).

Minorsky points out that the Toghuzghuz Turks [in Chinese *T'u-Küeh*] on the Orkhon had ceased to exist as a political power in A.D. 745; their western branch, continued by the Turgish clan, gave way to the Qarluq in about A.D. 776. The Uyghurs ruled on the Orkhon from A.D. 745 down to A.D. 840 when their federation was dissolved by the Qirghiz and the Chinese, a part of it only surviving in Kan-su and Eastern T'ien-shan (Minorsky, *Marvazī*, p. 94). Referring to the information given by *Marvazī* on Tibet, Minorsky comments that these details have a certain importance as suggesting that Muslims possessed some knowledge of the Sino-Tibetan borderland [possibly in the region of Szechuan] from where they could have advanced even into Yünnan (Minorsky, *Marvazī*, p. 91).

Si-la is the Silla Kingdom [in Chinese: Sin-lo] which comprised the central and eastern part of Corea (A.D. 755–935) (Minorsky, *Marvazī*, p. 89).

On the Korean peninsula there were three states—Kokudi, Silla and Paikche. When Emperor Kao Tsung [T'ang] was on the throne, Paikche and Kokudi joined forces to attack Silla. On the request of Silla, the emperor despatched 100,000 men who crossed the sea and with the support of Silla troops defeated Paikche. Later, Paikche prevailed upon Japan to attack Silla. In a fierce sea battle at the estuary of the Paikiang, the T'ang troops burned 400 Japanese warships, the Japanese suffering a crushing defeat. For a long time afterwards, Japan

was unable to renew her attempts against the Korean Peninsula (*A.O.H.C.*, pp. 110–11).

According to the Islamic geographers, Sīlā was situated at the extreme end of the inhabited world in the east through which the 180° longitude passed, this being the last longitude according to their calculations. The 0° longitude passed through the Canary Islands off the west coast of Africa. This was the limit of their knowledge between the East and the West.

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